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**Personal perspectives of major factors that influenced the  
educational, personal and professional development of  
senior-level black women administrators in higher education:  
Implications for future black women administrators**

Chatman, Cheryl Troutman, Ed.D.

The University of North Carolina at Greensboro, 1991

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PERSONAL PERSPECTIVES OF MAJOR FACTORS THAT INFLUENCED  
THE EDUCATIONAL, PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT OF SENIOR-LEVEL BLACK WOMEN  
ADMINISTRATORS IN HIGHER EDUCATION:  
IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE BLACK  
WOMEN ADMINISTRATORS

by

Cheryl Troutman Chatman

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the Faculty of the Graduate School at  
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Doctor of Education

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Approved by

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "C. M. Cicler", is written over a horizontal line.

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## APPROVAL PAGE

This dissertation has been approved by the following committee of the Faculty of the Graduate School at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

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Personal interviews were used to explore the educational, personal and professional experiences of 14 senior-level black women administrators in higher education. Positions held by these women ranged from academic dean to vice-president in historically black, white, public, co-educational universities and one private women's college within two counties in North Carolina. Strategies used in coping with hindrances; factors participants perceived as important to their achievements; and common themes that existed that may have implications for future black women administrators were also solicited. The interviews were transcribed and analyzed utilizing computer-assisted content analysis and the constant comparative method.

The Word Pairs portion of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) was used to determine if the target group differed significantly in their perception and judgement from 14 black women each of comparable age and educational level. The two comparison groups were selected from the same institutions where the women in the target group were employed during the study. These data were analyzed using multi-dimensional scaling and Q-factor analysis.

The findings from the interviews indicated that the senior-level black women administrators: held bachelor, master and doctorate degrees with 7 to 18 years of administrative experience; were mostly single with no children; were from families who valued education; most frequently identified their mother as the most influential individual in their lives; had experienced racial and sexual discrimination in their administrative exper-

iences; had worked their way up the hierarchical ladder; held higher positions at a women's college or community college than at four-year public universities; used negative experiences as motivators to excel; were actively involved in community and professional organizations; had received recognition and awards for leadership and service; and most frequently listed the ability to influence and work with others and organizational skills as their strengths, and a tendency to overload themselves and impatience as their weaknesses.

Findings from this study showed that a strong educational background, influential role-models and mentors, opportunities for leadership and training, recognition for accomplishments, and support from internal and external constituencies would enhance black women's experiences as administrators and increase their opportunities to receive administrative authoritative positions. These outcomes would have positive influences on the black family, community and black feminine leadership.

The target group's responses on the MBTI were not distinguishable from the responses of women comparable in age and educational level. How the target group's perception and judgement differed from the comparison groups could not be determined in this study.



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An unmeasurable amount of academic and moral support was consistently received from my initial advisor, Dr. Edwin Bell. The completion of this document was directed under the expertise of my committee chairperson, Dr. Charles Achilles and three committee members, Dr. Willie Baber, Dr. Lloyd Bond and Dr. Kieth Wright. Their expressions of interest, support and commitment are appreciated.

## DEDICATION

Family ties so gently teach you  
How to give and how to care,  
And family ties so warmly reach you  
Anytime and anywhere.  
M. F. Ames

This work is dedicated to my grandmother, the late Irene Brown Lloyd, “Mama Lloyd”, who personified qualities to which I aspire: faithfulness, gentleness, loving-kindness, understanding, humbleness, honesty, integrity, gracefulness, dedication, determination and vigor. Her life is a legacy that will continue to inspire me to acknowledge and trust in God, set high goals, maintain high morals and standards, respect the rights of others, work earnestly and diligently, and always serve the Lord. Her influence on my life and her contributions to society will have an enduring impact on the lives of many.

Nothing the heart gives away is gone. . .  
it is kept in the hearts of others.  
Marion Sayres

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### Overview

The primary purpose of this study was to explore various experiences that have enhanced or hindered the professional growth and development of senior-level black women administrators in higher education. This study was an attempt to recognize major factors that these black female achievers have identified as important to their successes, and to discover what benefits and/or barriers had an impact on their lives.

American women have been denied their history. They have been denied knowledge of their legitimate past and have been affected individually and collectively by having to see the world through male eyes. History has simply failed to ask those questions which would elicit information about the female contribution, the female point of view (Lerner, 1973). Throughout history, women's lives have consisted of social norms that cast them in subordinate, supportive and inferior roles in both their private and public lives (Ainsberg & Harrington, 1988). Little has been known or recognized about the achievements of women.

Black women have been doubly victimized by scholarly neglect and racist assumptions, belonging as they do to two groups which have traditionally been treated as inferiors by American society - blacks and women

(Collins, 1986; Lerner, 1973; Simeone, 1987). Their records lie hidden, frequently unnoticed, unread, and seldom interpreted. Their names and their accomplishments are known to only a few specialists. There have been few biographies of black women of the past, few scholarly interpretive works and fewer preserved memoirs or monographs relative to black women. Until recently, the contributions of black females have appeared insignificant or invisible. (Lerner, 1973; Moses, 1989).

Literature on men and whites is insufficient for understanding black women. There is a female and black aspect to all history. Black women were there and their experiences and special contributions to the building and shaping of society were different from those of whites and of men (Collins, 1986; Lerner, 1973; Moses, 1989). Black women, to one degree or another, have been the victims of individual and institutional discriminatory attitudes and practices based on their race and sex (Collins, 1986; Simeone, 1987). From 1619 to the present, struggles of black women have been waged from the lowest positions among black and white Americans, and they have labored under the most arduous conditions. While their contributions have been significant in the development of the Nation and in the continuing fight against the oppression of its black citizenry, black females have yet to enjoy the benefits of their suffering and strenuous labors. Obstructed by the dynamics of sexism and racism, especially in the places in which they work, the full leadership potential of black females throughout their history in this country has remained a relatively untapped or underutilized resource, not only in predominantly white institutions, but also in black communities as well (Dumas, 1980).

Education has been another means of further reinforcing the differences between men's and women's lives. During the colonial era, neither the idea of personal choice nor the opportunity for formal education existed for black women. Although social change was a constant in the American republic, black women were the steady, unchanging element in a changing world. For black women more than for men, education aroused opposition, because it gave black women an identity outside of the family (Solomon, 1985). While the utility of educating black women gradually gained acceptance, the anxiety of black men and whites over black women's possible abandonment of traditional roles persisted. The roles of black women could not remain static, for both the demands of black women themselves and the needs of a dynamic society necessitated their advancement and progress (Solomon, 1985).

This history of black women discloses a dialectic between their demands for education and the opposition they encountered (Solomon, 1985). They advanced from receiving an education to participating in education. They have been participants in higher education for more than a century (Moses, 1989). The process of women's entry into higher education has been integrally linked with economic, political and social factors that have shaped American life. At every stage of the progress, individual black women persisted in taking advantage of opportunities. Many misconceptions surround the status of black women on college and university campuses, in large part, because there is very little research specifically concerning black women in academe, how they are faring, and what issues are of concern to them (Moses, 1989).

If there is a theme that can emerge from examining the documentary record of black women, it is the strength, racial pride and sense of community of black women (Lerner, 1973). Black academic women are still pioneers, carving out places for themselves in an unwelcoming, non-supportive, and frequently antagonistic environment (Simeone, 1987). Black women have dreamed of a world not only better for themselves but for generations to come, a world where character and ability matter, not color or gender. "As they dreamed that world, they acted on those dreams, and they changed America" (Lanker, 1989, p. 13).

Remember me when I've come to the setting sun  
 Remember me and think of some good I've done  
 Remember me and count my blessings one by one  
 Not just for me  
 But for the work that I've done (Anonymous)

### Purposes of Study

The primary purpose of this study was to identify personal, educational and professional experiences that hindered and/or enhanced the professional growth and development of senior-level black women administrators in higher education. Two secondary purposes included examining procedures these women used in coping with hindrances that occurred in their personal, educational and professional lives, and identifying common themes that existed and that may have implications for future black women administrators.

### Significance of Study

At this moment in history, black women need above all to define

themselves autonomously and to interpret their past and their present in order to influence their future. This is a precondition for liberation as well as for future solutions to racial problems in education and in the United States (Lerner, 1983). Research on the personal and professional experiences of black women administrators could provide a better understanding of today's society. It could serve as one means of learning more about the stated backgrounds and characteristics of successful black women who represented various community constituencies, who taught and administered in the schools, who helped shape America, and who preserved cultural values. It could reveal how different black women administrators in different settings and time periods (between the 1940's and 1980's) responded to lasting discrimination that stymied the progress of black women (Rose, 1983).

Researching the history of black women could serve future black women administrators by arousing pride in a legitimate past, enhancing self-respect and providing authentic images and leaders with whom they can identify. Despite the vast differences among black academic women, there is such a thing as black women's experience (Ainsberg & Harrington, 1988). No two stories are completely alike, but there may be recurrent themes to serve as patterns or models for prospective black women administrators (Ainsberg & Harrington, 1988; Collins, 1986; Moses, 1989). This research could serve as a basis for the development of current and future black administrators through continuing educational programs designed to prepare them for changing and challenging tasks as black administrators.

Beyond the significance this research has for future black women administrators, a variety of other individuals and groups could learn from the black women's experiences as well: white men and women, black men, other people of color, personnel of educational institutions, and society at large. These individuals can become more sensitive to the rights, needs and achievements of black women.

Research in this area can add to the limited knowledge of the experiences black women have had in acquiring administrative positions in academic settings. It can provide general and specific knowledge regarding how their educational, personal and professional development aided them in acquiring senior level positions and how they coped with hindrances they may have faced on their way up the career ladder. Researching this topic may provide some understanding that could help explain the scarcity of black women in senior-level positions and may identify what institutions of higher education can do to prepare and aid black women in advancing into senior administrative positions. It may also provide key implications for insuring strong and equitable administrators for colleges and universities.

#### Research Questions:

1. What personal, educational and professional experiences hindered and/or enhanced the career development of senior-level black women administrators in higher education?
2. What procedures did senior-level black women administrators in higher education use in resolving hindrances in their personal,

educational and professional lives?

3. What common themes can be identified from the lives of senior-level black women administrators in higher education that would have implications for future black women administrators?

### Definitions

For the purposes of this study, the following definitions apply:

Executive — an individual who makes or carries out major organizational decisions, and provides direction to the activities of an organization.

Institutions of higher education — two-year community colleges and four-year public and private colleges and universities (excluding Bible colleges).

Middle-level administrators — individuals who have administrative responsibilities in positions ranging from directors to departmental chairpersons.

Private institutions — four-year colleges that are not controlled by and do not receive major funding from the state.

Public institutions — four-year universities which are a part of the University of North Carolina system and receive major funding from the state.

Senior-level administrators — individuals who have executive responsibilities in positions ranging from academic dean to president of a postsecondary institution.

### Limitations of Study

The focus of this study was on key factors that affected the personal, educational and professional experiences of black women administrators in higher education; coping strategies used for resolving hindrances they encountered; and patterns that existed for future black administrators. The study was restricted to two-year community colleges and four-year public and private colleges and universities within Forsyth and Guilford counties, North Carolina. This area, called the Triad, includes three major cities: Greensboro, High Point, and Winston-Salem.

Subjects for this study were not randomly selected. This study was not intended to be generalizable to all senior-level black women administrators, but rather to establish a baseline. It was designed to reveal the life experiences of a select group of black women administrators in higher education in the Triad Area.

All of the black women with titles ranging from academic dean to president in the targeted two- and four-year institutions in the Triad Area were asked to participate in the study. Three historically black institutions, Bennett College, North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University, and Winston-Salem State University, and one historically white institution, the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, were the only four-year institutions in the Triad Area where black women filled such positions. Guilford Technical Community College was the only two-year institution in the Triad Area that had a black female in any of the positions considered for this study. The participant group was fewer than 15 subjects.



Data collection was limited to personal interviews and the Word-Pairs portion of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI).

### Organization of the Study

Chapter I presented the overview, purpose, and significance of the research project. It also introduced the research questions, definitions and limitations of the study.

Chapter II provides a review of literature on research and issues related to black, white, male and female administrators in higher education. The history of black women, their educational opportunities and their former status in society are reviewed. The current status of black women in higher education is also presented.

Chapter III describes the research sample, instrumentation, procedures and methods used to analyze the data.

Chapter IV presents a demographic profile of sample participants and an analysis of the data collected from the interviews and the Word Pairs portion of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI).

Chapter V provides a summary of the research project, findings, and prior research, followed by conclusions and recommendations regarding senior-level black woman administrators. Responses to the research questions are also summarized.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The researcher explored various experiences that have contributed to the achievement of senior-level black women administrators in higher education. This study revealed major factors that black female achievers identified as important to their success, as well as benefits or barriers that had an impact on their lives.

The review of literature encompassed research studies, books and feature articles on the history of experiences that hindered or enhanced the personal, educational and professional experiences of black women; procedures they used in resolving hindrances; their career development patterns; and traditional roles and experiences of black women in higher education.

#### The Black Woman: A Historical Overview

Who is the black woman?

She is a mammy, a house-servant, a slaver's mistress, a diplomat. She is a college graduate. A drop-out. A student. A divorcee. A mother. A lover. A child of the ghetto. A product of the bourgeoisie. A member of the movement. A gentle humanist. A violent revolutionary. She is angry and tender, loving, hating. She is all of these things - and more (Cade, 1970).

"Slavery in American society has been characterized as the cruelest ever known to man" (Rodgers-Rose, 1980. p. 18). People were captured and

forcibly taken from their homelands, and in order to maintain the economic position of white men, the slave was defined as less than human, being considered and treated as chattel. The slaves were often sold naked, depicting to the public that the slaves were subhumans who didn't have any feelings or pride. Women, like the men, were poked, rudely examined and dehumanized (Lerner, 1973; Rodgers-Rose, 1980).

"American slavery was above all a labor system, designed to extract the maximum amount of profit from unwilling and dependent subjects" (Lerner, 1973, p. 5). The essence of slavery was that the slave was legally a piece of property to be bought and sold and disposed of at the master's will. The slave had no legal rights, could not bear witness against a white person nor testify in his or her own behalf. He or she was subject to the arbitrary will of his or her master in all matters. The treatment which slaves received depended on the personality, circumstances and economic condition of the master (Lerner, 1973).

"The slave woman was defined in terms of her breeding capacity" (Rodgers-Rose, 1980. p. 18). The concept of motherhood and the way care was generally provided for her children were minimized. The young slave woman was forced to give birth at least once a year, was given little time to regain her strength, and was granted only two weeks to care for her children before she was required to return to work. From then on she had to breast feed the baby between chores. White men (including the master, sons and overseer) raped black women and many children were born out of these unfortunate encounters. These children took the status of their mothers and were considered to be slaves (Rodgers-Rose, 1980).

A young black woman was not safe around white men and suffered sexual advances before reaching maturity. She was beaten and in some cases tortured to death if she didn't succumb to their advances. In some instances, the wife of a slave owner would take her jealousy out on the black woman and have her beaten. Perhaps the most difficult aspect of slavery to the black woman was the change that was forced on her in mother-child relationships. On the other hand, the strongest bond in slavery was that between mother and child (Rodgers-Rose, 1980). Although this may appear contradictory, slaves developed their own community, apart from that of the master (Blassingame, 1972). Mothers still managed to care for the children after work; they still managed to show love for them and made sacrifices for them (Rodgers-Rose, 1980). The black woman took an active part in trying to make the black sub-culture on the plantation a place where her children and her children's children could be free from the pressures of racism and feminism exploitation (Davis, 1982).

"The black woman's aims throughout her history in America have been for the survival of her family and of her race" (Lerner, 1973, p. xxv). It meant living in danger and hardship daily, swallowing anger and suppressing rage, and still somehow raising children with enough hope and courage to survive on her own. Black women stood with and beside their men, doing their share and more, taking over when necessary, and seeing to it that the race survived. They have shown the pride and strength of people who have endured and survived great oppression. This has provided them with a sense of their own function in the life of their race and families, and a strong confidence in their own worth. The black slave

women, while not respected by the white slave owners, were respected by their children and spouses (Blassingame, 1972; Lerner, 1973; Rodgers-Rose, 1980).

Black women have had an ambiguous role in society. They have been forced into service in the white family. They have nursed and raised white children, attended white people while they were sick, and kept white homes running smoothly. Black women, through this intimate contact with whites, have been interpreters and intermediaries of the white culture in the black home, while at the same time struggling in partnership with their men (Lerner, 1973). "This dual and often conflicting role has imposed great tensions on black women and has given them unusual strength" (Lerner, 1973, p. xxiii).

Life was difficult, but black women survived. They even appear to have gotten stronger as they were forced to cope with situations brought on by slavery. As we leave slavery, we find that black motherhood is still an important component of black womanhood, a strong work orientation, and an independence that originally came from Africa but that changed somewhat as a consequence of slavery. Black women took care of themselves because they were originally socialized to do so, and the circumstances of slavery forced them to do so (Lerner, 1973, p. xxiii).

### The Status of Black Women: A Historical Review

The status of black women can be viewed from two different viewpoints: as members of the larger society and within their own group. Within their own group, blacks among blacks, they often found work before black men could, because the jobs were the lowest-status, lowest-paid in society. This meant that black women had to be trained from childhood to become workers, and were expected to be financially self-supporting for

most of their lives. They knew that they had to work, married or single. Work to black women, unlike some white women, was not a liberating goal, but an imposed lifelong necessity. Due to this discrimination, access to semi-skilled and the middle range of professional jobs was closed to black women until the sixties. Black girls were expected to be trained to be teachers or lifetime domestic or low-skilled service workers. As a result, they were given more incentive to complete their advanced education than were black boys (Lerner, 1973).

Prior to 1930, black women could not expect their children to go far in school. Most of the black children didn't go to school beyond fifth grade or that far because they were forced to work the land with their parents. Not only did black children not go to school during harvest time, but when they did attend school, it was overcrowded, understaffed, and under inadequate conditions (Rodgers-Rose, 1980).

In terms of family structure, significant changes took place in the black family between the early 1960's and late 1970's. Up until 1960, 80 percent of all black children lived with both parents. By 1977, fewer than half lived with both. More and more black women were being forced to raise their children without the presence of a spouse.

### Educational Opportunities for Black Women

As Collier-Thomas (1982) clearly points out, "education has persisted as one of the most consistent themes in the life, thought, struggle and protest of black Americans. It has been viewed as a major avenue for

acquiring first class citizenship" (p. 173). "The history of black women in education offers valuable insights into the larger role played by women and blacks in the struggle for racial and sexual equality" (p. 178).

Like many other areas of American life, education has not been free from racism and sexism. Historically, black women have shared with black men the discrimination and deprivation that characterizes their sojourn from slavery to freedom. They have shared with white women some legal proscriptions which have limited their access to public institutions. However, despite the common problems, their historical experiences in every area of American life have been in very specific ways different from that of black males and white females (p. 174).

Educated blacks interested in careers in education could set up their own schools or teach in urban public institutions, developing black normal schools, or in the rural south. Racism and sexism were factors in the determination of where blacks, especially black females, could work. Until mid to late 1880's, black teachers found it extremely difficult to acquire teaching positions in black public schools due to the large number of white teachers who were employed by these institutions. White female teachers were replaced by male teachers. Many black institutions of higher learning had white presidents, a majority of white male and female faculty members, some black male professors, and a few black women. If black women were fortunate enough to acquire teaching positions, they were usually found teaching in rural schools and being paid less than white teachers and black males (Collier-Thomas, 1982).

Teaching and credentialing standards and procedures varied across the country. College degrees were required for teaching higher grades in some cities. Between the 1930's and 1950's, it was possible to teach in elementary schools with a high school diploma or in high schools with a

normal school certification. Up until 1910, the majority of black graduates from colleges and universities received certificates. From the normal schools, which were the schools that provided training for secondary school graduates, few black students become teachers (Collier-Thomas, 1982).

Prior to 1900, parents who could afford it sent their daughters to institutions where they were able to obtain a high level of education. After 1865, the development of black colleges, universities, and individual schools, along with the desegregation of some white colleges, provided greater opportunities for black men and women to further their educations. "By 1920, there were over 100 black institutions of higher learning to which women were admitted. At least three of these were known as being exclusively for black women; Scotia Academy, Spelman, and Bennett" (Collier-Thomas, 1982, p. 177). There was great concern among educated blacks about the type of training available at these institutions. Courses in these institutions were designed to meet the practical needs of the black community versus a classical education that was offered in white institutions (Collier-Thomas, 1982).

Over the past 90 years, black women have consistently moved into the teaching profession. In colleges and universities, there are proportionately fewer black women than there are whites and men who are ranked as tenured professors or serving as departmental and divisional chairpersons (Collier-Thomas, 1982; Doughty, 1980; Harvard, 1986; Williams, 1985). "They are almost non-existent at the top levels of academic administrators" (Collier-Thomas, 1982, p. 177). They hold few policy-making and



managerial positions beyond the junior high school level. Males hold the majority of positions as principals of high schools, on the school boards, state education agencies, superintendencies and other secondary and administrative positions.

### Research on Administrators in Higher Education

The literature on black women administrators is limited. There has been research done on blacks in academe, and on women, but very little research has been conducted on black women in higher education (Harvard, 1986; Moore & Wagstaff, 1974; Mosley, 1980; Shivers, 1985; Smith, 1982). "Black women are statistically lumped under the broad headings of women, minority, or black, and thus are frequently lost to the researcher" (Harvard, 1986, p. 6). Black women in academe continue to be an area of research "victimized by scholarly neglect" (Moore & Wagstaff, 1974, p. 16). Researchers add that this is due both to the relative scarcity of black women and the short time span since research has begun in this area (Moore & Wagstaff, 1974; Mosley, 1980).

An example of the exclusion of research conducted on black women is a book of 30 readings by Berry (1979) entitled Women in Educational Administration which does not address any of the concerns of black women, not even the broader issue of minority women. Due to the limited research on black women, little is known about their personal experiences, career development, successful leadership strategies or locations within white academic colleges and universities. Before reviewing some of the few studies conducted on black women, the following is a summary of the

findings of studies on men, blacks, and women in academe.

In general, studies (Cox, 1971; Fernandez, 1981; Moore & Wagstaff, 1974; Smith, 1980; Tucker, 1980; Wiley, 1971) have collectively revealed that in comparison to white administrators, black administrators:

1. Appear to have proportionally more duties related to black students and faculty;
2. Hold dual job titles;
3. Have positions that are not clearly defined;
4. Are more involved in routine, procedural and human relations type functions (staff officer) rather than in administrative authoritative positions that have direct responsibility for personnel, budget and programs related to major goal activities (line officer);
5. Have a lack of power;
6. Hold a significantly lower number of doctoral degrees;
7. Generally have fewer years of administrative experience;
8. Are excluded from informal professional networks by whites;
9. Have to perform at 150 percent to be considered capable.

Research studies (Fernandez, 1981; Fobbs, 1988; Gasser, 1975; Harvard, 1986; Ironside, 1982; Mark, 1986; Mosley, 1980; Tinsley, 1985; Walsh, 1975; Warner, 1988) on women have collectively shown that women administrators (in comparison to male administrators):

1. Are generally older;
2. Are promoted from full-time administrative positions;
3. Are promoted from within;
4. Prefer teaching, research and other administrative positions rather

than the presidency;

5. Engage in development, implementation and review of academic policies and programs versus more functional tasks;

6. Take longer to achieve higher positions;

7. Have different salary patterns (salary is higher than males at private schools; earn less at public schools);

8. Reach higher positions in community colleges versus four-year institutions;

9. Have interrupted career spans due to family responsibilities;

10. Have fewer scholarly publications;

11. Have fewer organizational affiliations;

12. Lack support from top administrators;

13. Lack proper training for position.

Women have traditionally been stereotyped as being more people-oriented, more collaborative and more emotional than men (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger & Tarule, 1986; Gilligan, 1982; Jones, 1987). Research tells us that most women administrators do "women's work" in higher education administration (Ainsberg & Harrington, 1988; Fobbs, 1988; Tinsley, 1985).

By 'women's work' . . . we refer to the fields women choose to study and teach, and the subjects they choose to write about, as well as the methods, and the approaches they employ in this labor. We realize fully that, in adopting such a term, we are claiming that women's intellectual work differs from that of men and that this claim is the subject of a fierce academic debate — and an ancient one (Ainsberg & Harrington, 1988).

An analysis of the literature on women in school administration

identified the following as internal barriers that keep women out of top leadership positions: lack of motivation, poor self-image, low career aspirations, and self-limiting beliefs and attitudes. External barriers listed included sex-role stereotyping, lack of adequate professional preparation, discriminatory hiring practices, organizational barriers, women internalizing traditional female behaviors, demands of family and home life, and discrimination in school and in society (Dohrman, 1982; Harvard, 1986; Shakeshaft, Gilligan & Pierce, 1984). Organizational structure as a barrier to women's entry and advancement with attention given to informal "old boys" information and informal power networks has been studied (Dohrman, 1982).

Fobbs (1988) states that in college and university administration, problems encountered by women include such specific on-the-job factors as discrimination in pay or promotion, differential reward systems, and lack of support for professional growth. Biemiller (1981) named four obstacles to selecting women as presidents: governing boards are comprised mostly of men, members of search committees fear that women lack budgetary and fund-raising experience, married women are unwilling to relocate, and women lack a female counterpart to the informal but highly influential "old-boy" networks, to which women generally do not have access. Jones (1987) adds that barriers such as "men still think that women must be exceptionally talented and skilled to 'make it' in an administrative position" and "one man out of three men still think that women will never be totally acceptable in management or leadership positions" (p. 1) have blocked the advancement of women into top leadership positions in America's colleges

and universities.

Barriers Arfken (1983) found that professional women face included: career imbalance, lack of equity, the cost of achievement, the power of money, the pressures of time, and the strain of stated and unstated role expectations from self and others. These conflicts were identified in women in dual-profession marriages.

At the intersection of race and gender stand women of color, torn by the lines of bias that currently divide white from non-white in our society, and male from female. The world these women negotiate demand different and often wrenching allegiances. As a result, women of color face significant obstacles to their full participation in and contribution to higher education (Carter, Pearson & Shavlik, 1988).

In their professional roles, women of color are expected to live up to performance standards set by white males. There is a loyalty to their culture that is expected by family and friends, while at the same time, they must struggle with their identity as women in a society that still questions their thinking. There are times they experience pressure to choose between their womanhood and their racial identity (Carter, Pearson, & Shavlik, 1988). "Black women cannot separate their femaleness from their blackness" (DeJoie, 1977, p. 12).

Minority female administrators are often viewed as tokens in higher education and are often treated as representatives of their category, as symbols rather than as individuals (Harvard, 1986; Mosley, 1980; Williams, 1985). There is the myth that these women are doubly blessed because they can be exploited as a "two-fer" (Williams, 1985). As Kanter (1985) points out, tokens are more visible because of their differences in sex and color, and are frequently given loyalty tests. They must be willing to turn against

the girls occasionally for the price of being "one of the boys."

While there is a dearth in higher education as to career path models that minority women could follow, some of the literature on women in public school administration and higher education reflects that the following are trends for minority women who wish to advance in administration:

1. The minority aspirant to administration in academe should begin with some grounding and experiential background in a discipline.
2. Minority women currently come to academe from education and human services.
3. A minority woman, more than others, must have the doctorate.
4. A minority woman needs the protection of tenure before she becomes "assistant to" or assumes other minor supervisory roles.
5. A minority woman must have experience in hiring, firing, and budgets. These can usually be gained most easily through grants.
6. A minority woman must have a resume that shows achievement and recognition by peers. These can be gained through committee assignments and professional organizations. Many of these must be with non-minority areas of interest.
7. A minority woman must realize that no one — not even white males — comes out of graduate school and moves into a deanship or senior position. Senior administrative positions usually take a decade or more to achieve.
8. Minority women must realize that they tend to be older when tapped for administration, but must guard against waiting until they will be

considered "too old" (usually in the mid- to late fifties).

9. Minority women should begin to network with non-minority women and become their natural allies (Williams, 1985, p. 11).

### Current Status of Black Women in Higher Education

Although recently scholars and researchers have acknowledged the need to explore the lives of black women, there is still an underrepresentation of data on black women, "too few in number to warrant a separate cell in statistical tables" (Smith, 1982; p. 318). A summary of some of the research conducted (Doughty, 1980; Harvard, 1986; Mosley, 1980; Williams, 1985) indicates that black women administrators in contrast to white and male administrators:

1. Are usually older when assuming their first administrative position;
2. Tend to be non-mobile or placebound;
3. Have healthy, positive self-perceptions in spite of system and pathological literature;
4. Are faced with academic opportunities that are limited by barriers that have nothing to do with their qualifications or competencies;
5. Have problems getting access to information necessary to do a job effectively.

Self-identity is acquired through stages of development as a person compares himself or herself with others — family, peer groups, and the larger society. The emergence of a positive personal identity depends on some acceptance and reinforcement of one's worth as a contributing

individual (Mosley, 1980).

Davis (1981) asserts that white women have had psychological damage due to the weak, submissive roles they have had to play in maintaining the middle-class ideology created by white men. She states that black women on the other hand, have escaped this type of damage because of the strong and creative roles they have played within and outside the home. Some writers (Davis, 1981; Moore & Wagstaff, 1974; Mosley, 1980) assert that black women are serving as role models for white women due to their more egalitarian positions and higher levels of education within their own communities. Some of the current behaviors and expectations of the women's liberation movements are past history for black women.

Stokes (1984) and Harvard (1986) report that women administrators feel that they work twice as hard as their male colleagues, are excluded from informal networks among male co-workers, have less influence on superiors' decisions, and feel that it's difficult to receive recognition for their accomplishments. Black women administrators feel overworked, underpaid, alienated, uncertain and powerless. They feel deserted, isolated and unsupported by black men and women. They believe that black men see them as not having any real power. There is a feeling of rejection and exclusion by males and women in their organizations (Mosley, 1980; Smith, 1982).

Black administrators are generally in positions peripheral to the policy and decision-making core of higher education in predominantly white institutions. In black academic institutions, black women administrators have for many years held positions as founders, presidents, deans and



department chairpersons, while in white academe, they are basically "invisible beings. Their status in higher education is a reflection of their status on the national scene — at the bottom" (Mosley, 1980, p. 306).

Black women generally play supportive roles in positions as assistants, associate deans, coordinators, human relations specialists, and head librarians (Moore & Wagstaff, 1974; Mosley, 1980).

In their study of respondents from 1,764 institutions, Moore & Wagstaff (1974) found that black women administrators were at the bottom of the higher education pile. No black woman held the presidency of a predominantly white institution. In February, 1986, Ebony identified 14 black women college presidents in the country. In 1987, three black women administrators were appointed to predominantly black institutions. They included Gloria Scott at Bennett College, Niara Sudarkasa at Lincoln University, and Johnetta Cole at Spelman College. It was the first time in history that black women held the presidency positions at the latter two institutions. Hoskins (1978) states that the task of finding black women administrators is a difficult one. More of them can be found in administrative positions in community colleges and in staff positions in higher education. In Moore & Wagstaff's (1974) study, out of the 633 black women on the four-year campuses studied, only four black female administrators held deanships, six were associate deans, 11 were assistant deans and 14 were department chairs. Very few were in policy or decision-making positions or on the central administrative staff. Those who were on administrative staffs were generally excluded from networks and served in roles related to minority students. Of the 1,111 two-year campuses studied,

only one predominantly black institution was headed by a black woman and only five women were deans. The deanship was the highest line position held by a black female on a predominantly white campus. None was an executive dean or business manager; eight were division chairs and five were vice chairs.

In a study designed to identify strategies for personal positional power, Alexander & Scott (1983) conducted in-depth interviews with 39 black women administrators in predominantly white institutions of higher education. They concluded that black women administrators must:

1. Learn and understand the organizational culture (acceptable and unacceptable behavior and practice);
2. Develop impeccable interpersonal and technical skills;
3. Learn what standard of performance is expected by their boss and meet those expectations;
4. Develop a cadre of supporters both inside and outside their departments and the university.

Napier (1979) analyzed and described the career paths of eight black female administrators and one white female administrator in co-educational institutions of higher learning and found that:

1. There seemed to be high competence among the target women in task related activities.
2. A majority of these women administrators had worked their way up the hierarchical ladder to top level administration.
3. Few of the administrators were "outsiders," most were "insiders"

who moved up within the organizational structure.

4. Advanced training and continuing education were significant in each administrator's preparation for top-level administration.

5. Risk taking behaviors, that required stepping out of traditional female roles, were a prerequisite for qualification for top-level administration.

6. The women studied seemed to be role-breakers in the sense that they had followed the male model for moving up through the ranks.

7. The female administrators worked at a level where their peers were predominantly male.

8. A sizeable number of the women administrators identified male mentors who had helped them climb to top-level administration in higher education.

All 39 women in the Alexander & Scott (1983) study reported some significant other person as contributing to their personal or career development. The significant other was typically either their minister, mother, or another black professional, or someone they identified with through the media or some other indirect association, but was rarely their colleague. Alexander & Scott (1983) concluded that mentor relationships were critical in the career development of these women. Schein (1978) stated that the term mentor has been used loosely today to mean teacher, coach, trainer, positive role model, developer of talent, opener of doors, protector, sponsor, and successful leader. Many articles in professional and popular publications emphasize the importance of a mentor to the career development of women. Most studies of mentoring have been done

in the business field and have typically investigated informal or "happenstance" mentoring some five or more years after less experienced proteges realized that they had been mentored in their career advancement or personal development by a more experienced, higher ranking co-worker who took a personal interest in them. Historically, women who became great were likely to have had great men behind them, at least for part of their lives. If all of the literature is to be believed, those women with mentors have more rapid advancement and higher salaries (Roache, 1979), greater knowledge about the systems in which they function (Dalton, Thompson & Price, 1977), and higher publication rates (Cameron & Blackburn, 1981). The benefits of mentoring have been so lauded that many entry-level professionals focus significant energy on developing mentor-protegee relationships.

Alexander & Scott (1983) remarked that "women who make it to the top of the professional hierarchy of management are unique and can contribute much to the professions they represent, because they are a valuable untapped resource" (p. 20). Based upon the research findings, these researchers have developed a career management model for black women which focuses on five major factors: attitude, image, competence, career mapping, and contacts.

Networking has been most important for black women. They cannot rely on the "old-boy" network to provide them assistance. They have always had their own networks so that they would have an arena in which their issues could take place. A network moves and shifts with its members, and a racially homogenous group can address concerns that may not appear on

other's agendas (Wilkerson, 1984).

In a qualitative study in which ten subjects were interviewed, Lewis (1985) supported the following generalizations:

1. Black females need to become more informed about the career development process and the choices and control they have over the direction and focus it can take.
2. Black females need to understand themselves more fully through an awareness of life stages and developmental tasks. Understanding how these life-stage issues intersect with and often impinge on career issues will assist the administrator to make better career choices.
3. Black females need to cultivate multiple support relationships from which they can receive mentoring functions rather than seek or expect an all-purpose mentor.
4. Networking with other women, specifically black women, can provide black females with the understanding, coping strategies and vitality needed to function effectively.

Similar themes that emerged in this study and in the Alexander & Scott (1983) study are that success in higher education leadership roles is enhanced by multiple support relationships, better known as mentors, and that developing networks is important to career advancement.

In conclusion, black women have been subjected to the restrictions against blacks and to those against women. They have consistently had the lowest economic and social-political status in society ranking below white men, white women and black men (Lerner, 1973). "Black women leaders in higher education must be willing to share their successful performances

and practices in order that other aspiring minorities and black women learn to emulate and applaud their successes while avoiding their failures and pitfalls" (Harvard, 1986, p. 17). A review of the research results and the conducting of future research on the experiences, accomplishments, hindrances and coping strategies of these women are means of contributing to that end. Black academic women are still pioneers, carving out places for themselves in unwelcoming, nonsupportive, and antagonistic environments (Simeone, 1987). The experiences and special contributions of black women administrators to the building and shaping of society are different from those whites and of men (Collins, 1986; Lerner, 1983; Moses, 1989). They have yet to enjoy the benefits of their suffering and strenuous labor (Dumas, 1980). They have dreamed of a world not only better for themselves but for generations to come, a world where character and ability matter, not color or gender. "As they dreamed that world, they acted on those dreams, and they changed America" (Lanker, 1989, p. 13).

I  
 am a black woman  
 tall as a cypress  
 strong  
 beyond all definition still  
 defying place  
 and time and circumstance  
     assailed  
     impervious  
     indestructible  
 Look  
     on me and be  
 renewed  
     Mari Evans

## CHAPTER III

### RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

#### Research Sample

The population for this study consisted of all of the senior-level black women administrators in higher education in Forsyth and Guilford counties of North Carolina, during the 1989-90 academic year. Senior-level black women administrators in these counties were chosen because of the homogeneity provided through this group. Selecting a small homogeneous sample (subgroup) allows for the group to be studied in depth. Homogeneity reduces extraneous variation and provides focus on a more defined phenomenon in greater depth (Patton, 1987).

There are 10 public and private four-year institutions and two community colleges in the Triad Area - the cities of Greensboro, High Point and Winston-Salem, located within Forsyth and Guilford counties of North Carolina. Table 1 reflects specific characteristics of the 12 institutions relevant to this study. Fourteen of sixteen (88%) black women who held positions as senior-level administrators in these institutions agreed to participate and became the sample in this study - 57% of them were from public co-educational universities, 7% were from a two-year institution, and 36% were from the only private college, a women's college, that had senior-level black women administrators. Only one of the seven predominantly white institutions had a black woman employed in the positions considered.

Table 1. Two-Year Community Colleges and Four-Year Public and Private Colleges and Universities in Forsyth and Guilford Counties (1989-1990) and the Number of Sample Participants in Each Institution

Institutions	Institutional Characteristics						No. of Sample Participants
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Bennett College	X			X		X	5
Forsyth Technical Community College		X	X		X		0
Greensboro College		X		X	X		0
Guilford College		X		X	X		0
Guilford Technical Community College		X	X		X		1
High Point College		X		X	X		0
North Carolina A&T State University	X		X		X		4
Salem College		X		X	X		0
School of the Arts		X	X		X		0
University of North Carolina at Greensboro		X	X		X		1
Wake Forest University		X		X	X		0
Winston-Salem State University	X		X		X		3
Totals	<u>3</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>14</u>

Code of Characteristics of Institutions:

- 1 - historically black
- 2 - historically white
- 3 - public
- 4 - private
- 5 - co-educational
- 6 - women only



Most participants (12 of 14 or 86%) were employed at the three historically black colleges and universities in the Triad Area. The names and positions of participants were identified by information received via telephone surveys to each of the 12 two- and four-year institutions.

The sample for this study had more similar backgrounds and experiences with each other than with people of other cultures (environments), ages, sex, and education. This study contributed to the limited research conducted on senior-level black women administrators in higher education, providing information about their personal experiences, career development, and successful leadership strategies within academic colleges and universities.

### Instrumentation and Procedures

The purpose of this study was to identify personal, educational and professional experiences that hindered and/or enhanced the professional growth and development of senior-level black women administrators in higher education; to examine their strategies for coping with hindrances that may have occurred in their lives; and to identify common themes that may serve as recommendations for future black women administrators. The two sources used to collect data for this study were interviews and the Word Pairs portion of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI).

### Interviewing

Interviewing was the principal source of data for this study.

The interview is one of the most powerful methods in the qualitative armory. For certain descriptive and analytic purposes, no instrument of inquiry is more revealing. The method can take us into the mental

world of the individual, to glimpse the categories and logic by which he or she sees the world. It can also take us into the life world of the individual, to see the content and pattern of daily experience. The interview gives us the opportunity to step into the mind of another person, to see and experience the world as they do themselves (McCracken, 1988, p. 9).

"The qualitative interview is useful because it can help to situate numbers in their fuller social and cultural context. Without a qualitative understanding of how culture mediates human action, we can know only what the numbers tells us" (McCracken, 1988, p. 9). "Shimahara says that human behavior - experience - is shaped by context and that events cannot be understood adequately if isolated from their contexts" (Sherman & Webb, 1988, p. 5). The contexts of inquiry are natural and must be taken as they are found. Thus, qualitative researchers focus on natural settings (McCracken, 1988).

McCracken (1988) adds that qualitative interviews are not designed to discover how many, and what kinds of people share a certain characteristic, but to gain access to the cultural categories and assumptions according to which one culture construes the world. It's the categories and assumptions that matter, not those who hold them. "In other words, qualitative research does not survey the terrain, it mines it" (McCracken, 1988, p. 17).

The interviews were flexible in style, and guided by a general list of topics and semi-structured open-ended questions (Appendix A) that were discussed, rather than followed by a rigid interview agenda. As Measor (1985) points out, "structured interviews are avoided in qualitative research; it is one of the key elements of the methodology. On the other hand the researcher does need a set of thematic areas which he or she wants to

cover" (p. 67). The general topics allow subjects freedom in responding and also allow the emergence of unanticipated data. A broad range of data including factual material, feelings, attitudes, values and other self-descriptions of the subjects can be gained through this method. "Unstructured interviews nearly always demand open questions....Open questions elicit a variety of responses....Broader questions permit greater flexibility." (Henerson, Morris, & Fitz-Gibbon, 1978, p. 94). "Starting with an open-ended, general question and then following it up with several specific questions is often a good way to enjoy the best of both worlds" (Henerson, Morris, & Fitz-Gibbon, 1978, p. 94). The use of open-ended, structured questions enabled the investigator to adapt, rephrase, and elaborate on information to assure coverage of specific questions to be addressed by each subject. The general topics and responses to the open-ended questions were categorized and later transformed into a matrix for final analysis. The topics and questions were reviewed by five middle-level black women administrators for clarity and content, and also approved by the researcher's Doctoral Committee.

Each participant was called for the following purposes:

1. To be introduced to the researcher and informed of specifics pertaining to the researcher and the purpose of the call (e.g. institution researcher is attending, time frame, purpose and design of study);
2. To obtain agreement to participate in the study.
3. If consent was received, to set up an official interview date(s).
4. To request a copy of each participant's vita to be provided after the interview. The vita would be used to obtain information regarding the subjects' educational, personal and professional records, and organizational affiliations. These data would aid in identification of

common themes in the lives of these women.

Each subject selected the time and location of the interview. Arrangements for the structured interview were confirmed by letter (Appendix B). A copy of the general topics and open-ended questions to be discussed during the interview were enclosed with the confirmation letter.

An initial interview with each of the participants was audio-taped when permission was granted by the interviewee. Although tape recording can make some people feel uncomfortable and self-conscious, it allowed the interviewer to capture more information than she could from her memory or notes. Use of the recorder was explained during the initial telephone call to attempt to ease some of the discomfort that participants may have had about tape recording. Only one interviewee requested that the recorder not be used during the interview, so the interviewer took notes. A copy of each participant's resume was collected at the end of the interview. The tapes were transcribed to typescript for final data analysis. Follow-up calls were made when it was necessary to clarify points or to pursue important issues that emerged. A copy of each participant's resume was collected at the end of the interview.

This study relied heavily on a qualitative approach because this method allowed the researcher to look for patterns of interrelationship between or among several categories rather than through a sharply delineated relationship between a limited set of categories, as sought in quantitative research (McCracken, 1988).

A difference between qualitative and quantitative approaches is the number and kind of respondents who should be recruited for research purposes (McCracken, 1988). The quantitative project requires inves-

tigators to construct a "sample" of the necessary size and type to generalize to the larger population. In the qualitative case however, the issue is not one of generalizability. "Qualitative research is much more intensive rather than extensive in its objectives" (p. 17). According to Bogdan & Biklen (1982), researchers who use the qualitative approach are interested in the ways different people make sense out of their lives. "Qualitative researchers are concerned with what are called 'participant perspectives'" (p. 29).

The researcher sought interpretation of experiences as they were "lived", "felt" or "understood" by the senior-level black women administrators and to discern relationships between and among those experiences. Qualitative researchers study experiences as a whole, not in isolation from the past or the present. This doesn't mean that qualitative researchers merely attempt to document all that can be known about an event or an individual in relation to the larger world (Sherman & Webb, 1988). "Qualitative inquiry is not merely a search for knowledge for knowledge's sake, but a search for the significance of knowledge" (Sherman & Webb, 1988, p. 46).

The researcher employed an interpretive frame of reference to bring meaning to the experiences of the senior-level black women administrators; to encompass their experiences, and to give form and shape to a conception of their roles and lives as a whole.

#### Word Pairs Portion of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)

The Word Pairs portion of the MBTI was administered to three groups of black women: 1) the 14 women who were in the sample of this study; 2) 14

black women with similar levels of education but differing in ages from the women in the sample; and 3) 14 black women that were similar in age but had less education than the women in the sample. The women in the comparison groups were selected from the same institutions where the women in the target group were employed at the time of the study. The level of education of all of the participants included high school or associate degree (5), bachelor (11), master (10), and doctorate (16). Their ages ranged from 31 to 65 years. Table 2 summarizes these data.

The portion of the MBTI used for this study (items 72-123) consisted of 52 pairs of descriptive terms from which respondents were to select the one that appealed to them most. There is support that the Word Pairs assess the kind of person that respondents would like to be (Myers & McCaulley, 1985). The responses were used to test the possibility that the subjects of the study were different in this regard from the women in the comparison groups.

The researcher wondered if there were patterned differences in the target group of black women and women comparable in age and educational level that influenced them in achieving their current positions. The Word Pairs portion of the MBTI (Appendix C) provided a partial answer to this question.

The MBTI is a reliable and validated instrument (Myers & McCaulley, 1985).

The construction of the MBTI was governed by an unusual requirement imposed by a working hypothesis. The hypothesis is that certain valuable differences in normal people result from their preferred ways of using perception and judgement. Each of these preferences, being a choice between opposites, is by nature "either-or," that is, a dichotomy.... Each dichotomy, according to the hypothesis, produces two categories of people. An individual will belong to one or the other

Table 2. Ages and Educational Levels of a Sample (n=14) of Senior-Level Black Women Administrators in Higher Education and a Sample (n=28) of Women Comparable in Age and Educational Level in North Carolina (1989-1990)

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		<u>Degrees</u>				
	<u>Age</u> <u>Range</u>	<u>Associate</u>	<u>Bachelor</u>	<u>Master</u>	<u>Doctorate</u>	<u>Totals</u>
Group 1	32-65	0	1	5	8	14
Group 2	32-61	5	9	0	0	14
Group 3	31-57	0	1	5	8	14
Totals		<hr/> 5	<hr/> 11	<hr/> 10	<hr/> 16	<hr/> 42

---

Group 1 - Target group

Group 2 - Comparable age group

Group 3 - Comparable education group

category based on his or her makeup and inclination. The object of the MBTI is to ascertain, as correctly as possible, the four categories to which the respondent naturally belongs (Myers & McCaulley, 1985, p. 140).

Myers & McCaulley (1985) in their use of the MBTI, state that the purpose of the Indicator was not to measure people, but to sort them into groups to which, in theory, they already belonged. Three assumptions, based on Jung's theory of psychological types, set the pace for the development of MBTI: 1) "true preferences" actually exist; 2) individuals can give an indication of the preferences that combine to form type, directly or indirectly, on a self-report inventory; and 3) preferences are dichotomized and the poles of a preference are equally valuable, each in its own sphere. "One of the first requirements imposed by the type hypothesis was that justice must be done to quite opposite viewpoints. Each dichotomy is a forced-choice between equally legitimate alternatives" (Myers & McCaulley, 1985, p. 141). The MBTI authors sought more for the respondents' indication of the basic preference that influenced them, rather than for the meaning. "They [the questions] were directed to seemingly simple surface behaviors in the hope that they would provide reliable clues to the complex and profound behaviors that could not otherwise be reached in a self-report instrument" (Myers & McCaulley, 1985, p. 141). The questions were intended to identify any clues about preference that would discriminate the two groups, in hopes the questions could provide evidence about the underlying preference. (Myers & McCaulley, 1985).

Questions in the MBTI are presented in forced-choice format because type theory postulates dichotomies. "The forced-choice format was required because both poles of a preference are valuable. The aim was to determine



which of two valuable or useful behaviors or attitudes are preferred (Myers & McCaulley, 1985).

The MBTI was administered to the women in the comparison groups prior to the interviews of the women in the sample. The instrument was mailed to the sample participants along with the confirmation letter and collected at the end of the interview. The data collected from the MBTI were analyzed utilizing multidimensional scaling and Q-factor analysis.

### Data Analysis

The data for this study were analyzed to answer questions regarding influences in the career development of black women administrators in higher education, utilizing computer-assisted content analysis, the Constant Comparative Method (CCM), multidimensional scaling and Q-factor analysis.

### Computer-Assisted Content Analysis

Computer-assisted content analysis was one method used to analyze the responses to the interview questions. According to Krippendorff (1980), "content analysis is a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from data to their context" (p. 21). He points out that like other analysis techniques, the purpose of content analysis is to provide a representation of "facts", new insights, knowledge as well as a practical guide to action. Holstei (1969) defines content analysis as a "multi-purpose research method developed specifically for investigating any problem in which the content of communication serves as the basis for inference" (p. 2). "In another definition by Berelson, content analysis is defined as 'a

research technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication" (Krippendorff, 1980, p. 21).

One method of analyzing content which can be conducted through the use of computers is by studying word frequencies. The computer analysis of word frequencies in text originated in 1957 when H. P. Luhn proposed it as a means of selecting abstract and index phrases. A decade later, the computer began to be used to analyze content by counting word frequencies.

Beginning in 1970, Dr. Kieth Wright, a committee member of this researcher, wrote computer programs for computer languages designed for matching patterns within texts. Some of these programs were revised in the 1980's by Dr. Wright and Dr. Theodore Hines (also of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro - UNCG), which enabled the programs to operate in a microcomputer environment using BASIC and GWBASIC. Various patterns of text and linguistic counting procedures have been revised at UNCG to operate on the VAX computer utilizing a language called the SPITBOL, which encompasses GWBASIC, the earlier language.

Dr. Wright assisted the researcher in using the SPITBOL programs to analyze the data gathered from the interviews of the senior-level black women administrators. This technique has been particularly effective in the analysis of taped interviews. The taped interviews were transcribed on a word processor, sent to the VAX computer as files, and processed by the SPITBOL programs. The significance of words and their proximity to other words in the text of the interviews were analyzed by sorting permuted sentences created by the SPITBOL programs. Words and phrases that re-occurred in the transcripts provided sections of the interviews that were studied further. The type (title, abstract, full text) and source of text were maintained (or monitored) by the programs. The findings from this

technique, the constant comparative method and the the results of MBTI were compared to determine if any insights from either set of data confirmed the other.

### Constant Comparative Method

The constant comparative method was also used to analyze responses to the interview questions. Glaser and Strauss (1967) developed a method of generating theory from data, which is called grounded theory. They assert that "grounded theory works, that it provides...relevant predictions, explanations, interpretations and applications" (p. 1). A major strategy that Glaser and Strauss emphasize in furthering the discovery of grounded theory is through a general method called comparative analysis. This is a strategic method of generating theory and can be generalized for use on social units of any size, large or small, ranging from individuals or their roles to nations or world regions.

Glaser and Strauss (1967) list five purposes for the use of comparative analysis: accurate evidence, empirical generalizations, specifying a concept, verifying theory, and generating theory.

Since accurate evidence is not so crucial for generating theory, the kind of evidence, as well as the number of cases, is also not so crucial. A single case can indicate a general conceptual category or property; a few more cases can confirm the indication....Generation by comparative analysis requires a multitude of carefully selected cases, but the pressure is not on the sociologist to 'know the field' or to have all the facts 'from a careful random sample'. His job is not to provide a perfect description of an area, but to develop a theory that accounts for much of the relevant behavior. The sociologist with theoretical generation as his major aim need not know the concrete situation better than the people involved in it....His job and his training are to...generate general categories and their properties for general and specific situations and problems. Research sociologists in their driving efforts to get the facts tend to forget that besides methodology, the distinctive offering of sociology to our society is sociological theory,

not only researched description... Where the sociologist can help...is by providing ...theory that will make their research relevant (pp. 30-31).

Glaser and Strauss (1967) state that "generating a theory from data means that most hypotheses and concepts not only come from data, but are systematically worked out in relation to the data during the course of research" (p. 6). The authors refer to this procedure as the Constant Comparative Method. For this study, this method generated theory by using coding and analytic procedures. Using this approach, the researcher did not begin with predetermined hypotheses, but rather developed them through the four stages of the process, which include comparing incidents applicable to each category, integrating categories and their properties, delimiting the theory and writing the theory.

This method of generating theory is a continuously growing process. After a time, each stage is transformed into the next and earlier stages remain in operation simultaneously throughout the analysis. Each stage "provides continuous development to its successive stage until the analysis is terminated" (p. 105).

The Constant Comparative Method requires the researcher to:

1. Begin collecting data;
2. Look for key issues, recurrent events, or activities in the data that become categories of focus;
3. Collect data that provide many incidents of the categories of focus with an eye to seeing the diversity of the dimensions under the categories;
4. Write about the categories being explored, attempting to describe and account for all the incidents in the data while continually searching for new incidents;

5. Work with the data and emerging model to discover basic social processes and relationships;

6. Engage in sampling, coding and writing as the analysis focuses on the core categories.

The constant comparative method of data analysis generated and suggested (but did not test) categories concerning the lives of the senior-level black women administrators. An attempt to ascertain the universality or proof of suggested causes or other properties related to the participants was not sought by this method for this study.

Since no proof is involved, the constant comparative method...requires only saturation of data - not consideration of all available data, nor are the data restricted to one kind of clearly defined case.... (It) is more likely to be applied in the same study to any kind of qualitative information, including observations, interviews, documents, articles, books, and so forth (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 104).

Grounded theory can take many forms. Glaser and Strauss (1967) state that although they "consider the process of generating theory as related to its subsequent use and effectiveness, the form in which the theory is presented can be independent of the process by which it was generated" (p. 31). They assert that grounded theory can be presented either as a running theoretical discussion, using conceptual categories and their properties or as a well-codified set of propositions. They have chosen the discussional form because it puts a high emphasis on theory as process, as an ever-developing entity, not as a perfected product. They believe that "theory as a process... renders the reality of social interaction and its structural context" (p. 32). The authors add that "the discussional form of formulating theory gives a feeling of "ever-developing" to the theory, allows it to become quite rich, complex, and dense, and makes its fit and relevance

easy to comprehend,...giving the feeling of a need for continued development (p. 32).

### Multidimensional Scaling (MDS)

The 2184 responses from the 42 participants on the MBTI were analyzed by use of MDS. MDS is a popular and powerful procedure constructing a spatial representation of subjects' responses to a set of stimuli that allows the investigator to determine among other things, the extent to which subjects use the same or dissimilar dimensions (Schiffman, Reynolds & Young, 1981). It was of importance to determine whether the target subjects used a different set of adjectives to describe themselves than did the comparison groups. In this analysis, the index of similarity used was the intersubject-correlation matrix of Word Pair responses. The similarity matrix for input to the ALSCAL SPSS-X program was the 42 x 42 subject intercorrelation matrix.

To test and understand MDS better, the researcher conducted a pilot test on 15 black women with at least a bachelor's degree, and 15 black women with less than a bachelor's degree, ranging in ages from 30 to 71. These black women were requested to rate 37 personality descriptors on a five-point Likert scale, indicating the significance the descriptors had in their assessment of an ideal personality type. This tool (Appendix D) has been previously pilot tested and used by other researchers. The data gathered from the pilot test were analyzed using MDS.

MDS uses proximities or numbers which indicate how similar or how different two objects are, or are perceived to be (Kruskal & Wish, 1984). Each point in the spatial configuration corresponded with one of the objects.

The larger the dissimilarity (or the smaller the similarity) between the two objects, as shown by their proximity value, the further apart they were in the spatial map. Kruskal & Wish (1984) point out that one of the most important methods of examining the configuration, which yields useful insights, is simply to look at the arrangement of points. They add that MDS is a systematic procedure for obtaining a configuration which reflects the proximity values. They recommend that the researcher find his or her own interpretation about the configuration. "The process of interpreting the configuration is the central step in many applications" (p. 12) of MDS.

MDS calculations are generally performed with the aid of a computer. The first step of the data analysis was to compute the mean similarity for each of the three participant groups. The mean ratings were arranged in a matrix form that was acceptable to an MDS analysis. The computer output included a list of coordinates for the characteristics and the plot or diagram of these values. Kruskal & Wish (1984) state that "the most common way of interpreting such a multidimensional solution is to look for lines in the space, possibly at right angles to each other, such that the stimuli projecting at opposite extremes of a line differ from each other in some easily describable way" (p. 31). The interpretive process leads to identification of dimensions.

"Dimensionality' and the 'number of dimensions' both refer to the number of coordinate axes, that is, the number of coordinate values used to locate a point in the space," (Kruskal & Wish, 1984, p. 48), (like the number of factors in factor analysis). Dimension has various meanings but for this study, it referred to the number of dimensions used in the configuration. It is possible to carry out MDS in two-, three- and R-dimensional space for  $R=1,2,3,4,\text{etc.}$  The various graphical devices for displaying the results are

more imperfect as the value of  $R$  increases (Kruskal & Wish, 1984).

The decision about the appropriate dimensionality to use for a given set of data is based on the interpretability, ease of use, stability, and goodness-of-fit. A two-dimensional space was used for this study.

### Q-Factor Analysis

The responses to the Word Pairs portion of the MBTI were also analyzed using Q-factor analysis. This technique is a factor analysis of the subject-by-subject correlation matrix, not the variable correlation matrix. The Q-technique reverses the usual factor analytic procedure by factor analyzing the subject correlation matrix rather than the variable inter-correlation matrix. Thus, if two or more groups differ systematically on a set of variables, then the groups should cluster together in the resulting "person factor space" (Cattell, 1966).

### Summary

Through the use of interviews, the researcher explored experiences that influenced the professional growth and development of selected senior-level black women administrators in higher education. The Word Pairs portion of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) allowed the researcher to compare preferences of the target group to women comparable in age and educational level. In that the MBTI is designed to reveal participants' preferred ways of using perception and judgement, the researcher was interested in how the participants' preferences differed and the implications the differences may have had on their career choices or level of achievement. The computer-assisted content analysis and the constant



comparative method were used to identify any common themes or patterns that existed among the lives of the participants. Multidimensional scaling and Q-factor analysis were selected to determine if there were any significant differences between the preferences of the target group and comparison groups. Data from this research could serve as recommendations for educational institutions in addressing the needs of black women administrators as well as indicators for future black senior-level administrators.

## CHAPTER IV

### DATA AND ANALYSIS

This study explored various experiences that have contributed to the achievement of senior-level black women administrators in higher education. This study was an attempt to recognize major factors these black female achievers identified as important to their successes, and to discover what benefits and/or barriers had an impact on their lives.

This chapter presents an analysis of the data obtained from interviews and surveys of the senior-level black women administrators employed (1989-90) in institutions of higher education in Forsyth and Guilford counties in the Triad area of North Carolina. Of the 16 eligible black women, 14 (87.5%) agreed to participate in the study. Participation involved an interview which included completing the Word pairs portion of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI). Personal and demographic data were obtained from participants at the end of each interview session.

Twenty-eight black women faculty and staff employed in higher education at the same institutions and who were comparable in age and level of education as the target population were also selected to complete the Word Pairs portion of the MBTI. Age, highest educational level, and current position of each participant were requested on the survey.

The interviews were transcribed and analyzed through computer-assisted content analysis and the constant comparative method. The

survey responses were analyzed through the use of multidimensional scaling (MDS) and Q-factor analysis (Chapter 3).

### Demographic Profile of Sample Participants

Table 3 is a demographic profile of the participants. Their average age was 49, ranging from 32 to 65 years, with three under 39 and six over the age of 49. Four participants were married, and 8 of the 10 who were single had never been married. Three participants had children; one with two children and two with one child, all of whom were over 20 years old at the time of the study.

None of the participants was an only child. All were from families with 2 to 10 children per family; 6 families had 2 children, one family each had 3, 6, and 10 children, 3 families had 4 children, and two families had 5 children. Five of the women were the oldest child in the family, five were in the middle, and four were the youngest. Nine participants were first-generation college students, four were second-generation college students and one was a third-generation college student. The majority of the participants' siblings completed college or graduate studies. Twelve of the 14 participants had the highest degree in their families.

The parents of five of the participants were teachers (one father was a principal), corresponding to the five whose parents were first- and second-generation college students. Some of the parents who did not attend college were children during the time period when blacks could not expect their children to go far in school. Prior to 1930, most of the black children didn't go to school beyond the fifth grade because they were forced to work in the fields with their parents. Occupations of the participants' parents included

Table 3. Demographic Profile of Senior-Level Black Women Administrators in Higher Education in North Carolina (n=14), Showing Numbers and Percent in Selected Categories (1989-1990)

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>	
<u>Ages</u>			<u>Average Age</u>
28-38 years old	3	(21%)	49 years
39-49 years old	5	(36%)	
50-60 years old	3	(21%)	
Over 60 years old	3	(21%)	
<u>Marital Status</u>			<u>Average Years of Experience</u>
Married	4	(29%)	20 years
Never Married	8	(57%)	
Divorced	2	(14%)	
<u>Order in Family</u>			<u>Average Years in Current Position</u>
Oldest	5	(35.5%)	4 years
Middle	5	(35.5%)	
Youngest	4	(29.0%)	
<u>Family Educational Background</u>			
1st generation college	9	(64%)	
2nd generation college	4	(29%)	
3rd generation college	1	(7%)	
<u>Highest Degree Earned</u>			
Bachelor	1	(7%)	
Master	5	(36%)	
Doctorate	8	(57%)	
<u>Years of Experience in Higher Education</u>			
6-10 years	1	(7%)	
11-15 years	3	(21%)	
16-20 years	4	(29%)	
21-25 years	4	(29%)	
Over 30 years	2	(14%)	
<u>Years of Experience in Current Position</u>			
1-5 years	11	(79%)	
6-10 years	1	(7%)	
11-15 years	1	(7%)	
16-20 years	1	(7%)	

housewife, farmer, business (one mother owned a beauty parlor; one father owned a service station), mechanic, postal worker, factory worker, and domestic. Either one or both parents died when four of the participants were aged three to eight. In these cases, grandparents or an aunt and uncle raised the participants. Parents or guardians of over half of the participants are currently living.

Participants averaged 20 years of experience in an institution of higher education, with a range of 9 to 41 years. Prior to their current positions, these women had been employed in higher education a range of 7 to 31 years. Eleven participants had been in their current positions for less than two-and-a-half years, and one each for 6, 12 and 18 years. These statistics are consistent with findings from studies by Doughty (1980), Harvard (1986), Mosley (1980) and Williams, 1985, which report that black women administrators tend to be older than males when tapped for senior-level administrative positions; and are generally promoted from full-time administrative positions within the institutions in which they are employed.

Table 4 is a list of the administrative positions participants held prior to those they held at the time of the study. Table 5 is a list of the administrative positions participants held at the time of the study. These lists support studies conducted by Moore & Wagstaff (1974) and Mosley (1980) which state that black women generally play supportive roles in positions as assistants, associate deans, directors and the like. They also support findings from numerous studies (Fobbs, 1988; Harvard, 1986; Ironside, 1985; etc.) which show that relatively more black women are found in higher positions in community colleges than in four-year institutions,

Table 4. Senior-Level Administrative Positions of a Sample (n=14) of Black Women in Higher Education in North Carolina Prior to Current (1989-90) Positions

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Public Four-Year Historically Black Co-Educational Institutions

Acting Vice-Chancellor for Development and University Relations

Assistant to the Chancellor

Assistant Vice-President of Development

Dean of Student Development

Director of Development

Director of Planning and Budget

Director of Public Relations

Director of Student Activities

Director of Student Teaching

University Director of Title IX

Public Four-Year Historically White Co-Educational Institutions

Assistant Dean of Students

Private Four-Year Historically Black Women's College

Coordinator of Academic Affairs

Vice-President for Student Affairs

State University System

Assistant Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs

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Table 5. Senior-Level Administrative Positions Currently Held by a Sample  
(n=14) of Black Women in Higher Education in North Carolina  
(1989-90)

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Community College

Vice President of Student Development and Institutional Support

Public Four-Year Historically Black Co-Educational Institution

Assistant to the Chancellor

Assistant Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

Assistant Vice Chancellor for Development

Dean of Student Development

Special Assistant to the Chancellor (2)\*

Special Assistant to the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs

Public Four-Year Historically White Co-Educational Institution

Assistant to the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs

Private Four-Year Historically Black Women's College

Special Assistant to the President

Vice President for Academic Affairs

Vice President for Fiscal Affairs

Vice President for Institutional Advancement

Vice President for Student Affairs/Special Assistant to the President

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\*(2)-indicates that two participants held this particular title

where they generally hold staff positions. In this study, participants employed at the black women's college held line positions, and the president of that institution was a black woman. Finally, as Mosley (1980) indicated, black women have held more higher positions at historically black institutions than at historically white institutions, which was confirmed by this study.

Eight participants had doctorates with a range of 7 to 18 years of administrative experience; five had masters with 9 to 13 years of administrative experience; and one had a bachelors degree and 41 years of experience in the same administrative office. The participants generally had held two to four lower-level administrative positions prior to the positions held during this study. All were actively involved in numerous professional organizations and activities, including local, regional and national committees, advisory boards, review boards, administrative boards, task forces, commissions, symposia, institutes, and the like. Various participants have served as consultants and guest speakers, conducted seminars and workshops, prepared and implemented proposals, directed programs, presented papers, and conducted published and unpublished research. Each participant was active in community life. They have chaired conferences, committees, departments, and divisions; headed projects; coordinated functions and activities; and implemented program goals and objectives. They have received funding from grants and have supervised large budgets. One participant appeared before an United States Senate subcommittee, which resulted in a two million dollar appropriation to study the capabilities of junior college science and science-education programs. Funds that these participants have been



instrumental in receiving have benefitted not only their areas or organizations, but the communities as well. The participants had received various leadership awards, service awards, scholarships, fellowships and other academic honors, including memberships in various honor societies. Table 6 lists some of the awards and honors they have received throughout their careers.

Although prior research has reported that women administrators have fewer organizational affiliations than male administrators, Table 6 illustrates the participants' level of involvement, contributions and achievements.

### Interview Data

The interview data were transcribed and later analyzed using computer-assisted content analysis and the constant comparative method. A word frequency study was conducted utilizing the SPITBOL computer program to count all of the significant words in the text of the interviews. These words were saved in the "context" of the sentences in which they appeared, and sorted into files that corresponded with categories of questions asked of the participants. The findings from this technique that supported the theories generated from the constant comparative method are incorporated throughout the data presented below.

### Socio-Cultural Influences on Education

A consistent factor that emerged early in the interviews of 12 of 14 (86%) of the participants was the strong value placed on education by parents or guardians. There was a "normal or understood" expectation for

Table 6. Awards and Honors Received by a Sample (n=14) of Senior-Level Black Women Administrators in Higher Education in North Carolina Throughout Their Careers

- 
- Alumnae Association Faculty Service Award
  - Appreciation Award for Service to Community - Greensboro City Council
  - Citizenship Award - Business and Professional League
  - Distinguished Alumnus Award
  - Employee of the Year
  - Ford Foundation Fellow
  - Founding Member of Editorial and Managing Staff of Down Home Magazine
  - George C. Simkins Appreciation Award for Service to community  
National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
  - Greensboro Mother of the Year - Greensboro Merchants Association
  - Improved Fundraising Capabilities Program Fellow
  - International Who's Who in Community Services
  - Nathaniel Greene Award for Community Service - Greensboro Chamber of Commerce
  - Outstanding Administrator Award
  - Outstanding Business Woman
  - Outstanding Woman of the Year
  - Outstanding Young Educator - Junior Chamber of Commerce
  - Outstanding Young Woman of America
  - National Association of Personnel Workers Presidential Award
  - National Science Foundation Fellow
  - Service to Mankind Award - Nathaniel Greene Sertoma Club
  - W. K. Kellogg Foundation Fellow
  - Who's Who Among American Women
  - Who's Who Among American Women in Education
  - Who's Who Among Personalities of the South Who's Who Among Black Americans
  - Who's Who Among Emerging Leaders
  - Who's Who Among United States Executives
  - Who's Who Among World Women - National Baptist Directory
  - Who's Who in American Colleges and Universities
  - Woman of the Year - National Council of Negro Women
  - Woodrow Wilson Fellow
-

these women to attend college. This expectation has persisted over many years. Lerner (1973) recounted the incentive given to black females to advance their education as far back as the thirties. Collier-Thomas (1982) noted that education has been one of the most consistent themes in the lives of black women and men. It was previously viewed as a major avenue for acquiring citizenship, and its perceived importance by participants' parents and guardians is clearly evident in the following responses by participants of this study:

I came from the tradition of a black family who believed that education was important....It was a natural sequence; there was an expectation to go to college.

My family always pushed education...The question was never 'are you going to college?' It was always 'where are you going?'....Education was always a big thing in our family.

School was always very, very important. The value of it meant that we had to go to school. My father said to us constantly, 'what are you doing to make sure that you fail?'

I come from a family background of teachers and people who believed strongly in the value of education. There was never at any point in my life, a question about finishing high school, or going to college.

My parents were not college graduates, but they were supportive of their children and they encouraged us....They always had great aspirations for my sister and me....I did not really think about the...how or why of going to college....I knew I was going to college.

My basic motivation for going to college came from my parents. My parents have always had a strong impact upon me in every way, especially educationally, because education seems to be a very high priority on the maternal side of my family. Both of my parents are black college graduates and have felt that a college degree and consider a college education to be a strong or a definite avenue toward some sort of success in life.

By not having parents and by the fact that she [grandmother] was already 61 years old, she taught us to be independent. We could make decisions about what we were going to do with our lives. The one thing

we could not compromise...was that we would go to college.

Even over a span of 34 years, the value of education within the homes of these black women was the same. Two participants' parents did not provide encouragement or motivation for their children to attend college. Their values and expectations were influenced by the social and financial status and conditions of blacks during that time period. As one participant responded,

I always dreamed of [going to] college....When I graduated I knew that my uncle and aunt could not send me to college because you know in those days, they felt that if you graduated from high school, you had accomplished something, so they never really seriously thought of my going to college.

Lerner (1973) noted that black women historically had to be trained from childhood to become workers, and were expected to be financially secure and self-supporting for most of their lives. The other participant who did not receive encouragement to attend college remarked,

I...got out of it - broke the shackles of impoverishment to go on to college. ....In my family I did not receive very much encouragement. Their work ethic was to do what you could to make money to buy a home, to buy a car. But the higher motivational goals of getting an education were not a part of the family.

One participant's parents were under the same social expectations and beliefs as described above, but they still provided encouragement to their child.

In the early sixties,...my mother and relatives still questioned the whole thing of [my] getting a degree....There were certain implicit assumptions about going to school. I worked my way through school and got the whole series of loans and things to make it through because my parents you know, could just not afford it. But even in doing that they still encouraged [me] and wanted [me] to have an

education.

The educational values of most participants' families appeared to set a firm foundation for the participants' career development and enhancement. The foundation, determination, educational preparation, and experience enabled the participants to advance to greater opportunities that would move them upward. Nearly all of the participants mentioned teachers, school administrators, church members and neighbors who also provided motivation and encouragement for them to attend college.

As indicated from the word frequency study, participants expressed their educational interests in terms of "want to", as a phrase to indicate strong motivation or desire for education. These women portrayed a desire to be in school or a part of education. They frequently mentioned education (45), schools (135), colleges (74), graduate programs (21), courses (50), degrees (16) and teaching (56) in relation to their personal, educational and professional development.

Another motivating factor for participants to attend college was the requirement for teachers in higher grades to have college degrees. Prior to the sixties, black women were expected to be trained teachers or low-skilled service workers. Access to semi-skilled and middle-range of professional jobs was closed to them (Lerner, 1973). The participants' responses to their career goals after high school reflected these practices.

When I first attended school, I did not want to go into teacher education; that was not my goal. But at that time mother told me, 'you aren't going to be able to get a job in anything else because that is all [that is] available to women.' So I said, 'well I can go and major in education but once I finish, I can do something else.' And I really wanted to go into social work because I liked helping other people.

[My parents] really thought of an education as being a teacher. You

were either a teacher or that was it. It was frowned on to go into anything other than teaching.

As a...high school student,...I wanted to be a radio commentator..., but my mother told me I had to be a teacher. So, I decided that I would be a teacher and that I would be a good one....I realized that I could not be a radio commentator merely because my experiences were very limited in that particular area. I didn't have a teacher who was able to tell me where I could go in order to do that because their experiences were limited in the same area.

I had always been interested in and had planned to go into social work, but when I got ready to leave, my high school principal said, 'no, you've got to be a teacher.' I said, 'no, I don't want to be a teacher'....I came back and started teaching at the high school immediately upon graduation.

Due to their personalities, aspirations, determination and in some cases even their stubbornness, some participants did not pursue teaching careers, despite the demands of the times. Times had changed during the lives of other participants, which afforded them more career options. "From the time I was eight years old until I was...better than half-way through college, I never intended to be anything but a physician," remarked one participant. "I wanted to be a secretary; I did not want to teach because I did my practice teaching and I did not like it at all," responded another. Another participant stated, "I really didn't have a fix on the area that I would be going into [but after] talking with my high school friends,...I decided that when I went to school, I was going to go in business." One participant added, "My interest for the most part has always been in educational administration with perhaps the opportunity to venture into entrepreneurship of some sort."

All of these women were influenced and determined at an early age to excel, to go beyond the average in their endeavors. This became their primary goal. During the time most of them were high school graduates

(between the 1940's and 1960's), they never knew that women, especially black women, could hold administrative positions, so it was natural for them not to aspire to administration. The participants shared how both positive and negative experiences had a major impact on their lives and had some effect on their goals, philosophy, attitudes, decisions, and/or direction in their personal and professional lives.

### Positive and Negative Influences

In sharing experiences that had positive and negative influences in their lives, participants used the terms difficult, frustrated and discouraged less frequently than they used the words encouragement and enjoyment. They exhibited positive attitudes about both types of experiences and indicated that they tended to focus or emphasize the positive rather than the negative experiences. Table 7 summarizes events and experiences that participants felt were key turning points in their lives. This list combines goals, opportunities, and achievements as well as barriers, disappointments, and frustrations that helped participants gain new perspectives, insights, and incentives. As the participants reflected on major factors that had impacted their lives, they commented about whether or not they would make any changes if they had opportunities to recast their career patterns.

Six participants clearly said "no," they would not make any changes in their career patterns if they had opportunities to recast them; five distinctly said "yes"; one said "probably yes"; one stated "probably not", that she would do things the way she had already done them; and one indicated that she doubted that she would make any changes.

Participants who stated that they would not make any changes

Table 7. Positive and Negative Influences in the Lives of a Sample (n=14) of Senior-Level Black Women Administrators in Higher Education in North Carolina (1989-1990)

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Positive Events

- Scoring high on achievement tests and skipping grades
- Living in Japan for three years at the age of 21
- Receiving terminal degree
- Deciding to become a vice-president
- Managing successful programs
- Facing husband's loss of an election - learned from mistakes and more about people
- Shifting from the classroom to administration
- Moving from private to public sector
- Deciding to quit job to work on doctorate full-time
- Receiving a scholarship to college and traveling abroad
- Participating in the March on Washington in 1963; witnessing Martin Luther King, Jr.'s speech and the entire experience
- Being appointed and chairing the Greensboro Human Relations Commission
- Receiving senior-level position
- Getting involved in professional organizations
- Chairing state task force on alcohol
- Receiving leadership opportunities in high-powered roles
- Taking the initiative to leave the public schools due to being moved from school to school and not having any involvement in the process or in the decision-making
- Receiving opportunities to expand, from a supervisor
- Receiving fellowships and the benefits and opportunities that followed

Negative Events

- Coming face-to-face with institutionalized racism
  - Facing racial incident with professor in graduate school
  - Getting the run-around in graduate school
  - Confronting political conflict regarding a major decision
  - Being excluded by the old boys' network
-



commented that they were satisfied with their lives the way they were; they enjoyed doing what they had done; and they wouldn't give anything for some of the experiences they've had, some of the people they've met and some of the situations they've been in. Some felt that the bad times had strengthened them and the experiences had helped them to get where they are today. One participant stated that if everything had been handed to her on a silver platter, she may not have appreciated the accomplishments she's made thus far. Another participant indicated that she would not make any changes in her career pattern but that she wouldn't have worried as much as an undergraduate, and would have been more relaxed and had more fun if she could relive that portion of her life. Still another participant who preferred not to change any aspect of her career development did point out that maybe she could have done more to help others and if she were to recast her life, that would be a possible change.

The five participants who said that they would make changes if they could recast their career patterns mentioned that: they would have defined their career goals earlier in life and therefore could have achieved them earlier; they would have planned for a career more systematically and approached a career more directly; or they would have begun or received terminal degrees earlier in their careers. An observation made earlier in this study was the fact that during the period that most of these women were planning their careers (between the 1940's and 1960's), women were not provided opportunities to hold senior-level administrative positions in higher education. They, moreover, were not encouraged by higher administrators to pursue terminal degrees. These experiences were consistent with experiences of women administrators cited in studies by

Fobbs (1988), Gasser (1975), Harvard (1986), Ironside (1985), Mosley (1980) and others. Participants also shared race and sex-related experiences they had as senior-level administrators that were different from those of white and male administrators as described below.

### The Effects of Race and Sex On Opportunities

As it was from the beginning of slavery, race and sex were factors that affected what jobs and opportunities participants in this study received in their climb upward. The participants shared various incidents throughout their personal and professional lives that they strongly felt and believed were results of them being either black, a woman or both. Their experiences offer insights into the role black women played in the struggle for racial and sexual equality. They recounted discriminatory acts dealing with race and sex that caused them to feel mistreated, unwanted, and unaccepted. Some described barriers that prevented them from reaching senior-level administrative positions earlier in their careers because of a lack of trust and respect for their capabilities, and due to the greed and jealousy of some of the men and women, both black and white, with whom they came in contact.

I think that had I not been a woman, I probably would have gotten where I am much earlier....When I taught in an integrated situation, I felt I was totally ignored, not so much because I couldn't do the work, but the whole notion that white people view blacks as just inferior is the same old story. The opportunity to advance in organizations and get leadership opportunities - - the barriers were always there, and it is still the same.

I can think about the time I came face-to-face with what I call institutionalized racism, deeply embedded racism. When we [teachers and students came back from a field trip, I went downstairs and some of the faculty members and male students...were singing Dixie. When

I came through, they didn't stop singing or even slowing down. They knew that Dixie was a fighting tune for blacks....I was so angry.....To me, that was the height of insensitivity.

I should have been a vice-president a long time ago...,probably six years before I became a vice-president. So racism was an obstacle....I think racism continues to be a factor....There will be barriers out there and you will get it from both sides,not only because you are black, but also because you are female.

In the word frequency study, participants most frequently mentioned racism (7), males (7), and whites (6) as major barriers. The individuals the participants discussed were described as having particular views, prejudices or attitudes.

Harvard (1986), Mosley (1980) and Williams (1985) commented that minority women administrators were often viewed as tokens in higher education and treated as representatives of their category, or as symbols rather than as individuals. One participant remarked,

[In the] first job that I had,...I did not think that I was doing meaningful work and I started to get the 'spook-who-sits-by-the-door' syndrome. 'I'm here because I'm black and I'm satisfying somebody's need to have a black person in this organizational structure if not in this particular position. So I was extremely unhappy.

Kanter (1985) discussed how female tokens are sometimes given loyalty tests and must be occasionally willing to turn against the girls in exchange for being considered one of the boys or wanting to keep other women back. As one participant shared,

The chancellor came to me and said, 'I want you to apply for this position [as vice-chancellor]....I applied for it and there were two finalists. I didn't have the doctorate; the man had the doctorate but I am convinced that it was not the doctorate [that was] the reason I didn't get it, but because the female special assistant to the chancellor told him that she did not want me to be the vice-chancellor. That's the queen bee type of thing ...that caused my disappointment in not getting the position.

Prior to the incident, this participant served as assistant and then as acting vice-chancellor at the same institution for over 10 years.

Carson, Pearson, & Shavlik (1988) found that there were times when minority women's identity was challenged in a society that still questioned their competence.

I have run into things with black men who say, 'You want to be a man or a woman this morning?'....And then I've had other men to tell me that they're happiest when their wives are darning socks.

Another participant described a comment made to her by a male president of a black women's college when she approached him about the possibilities of her working at the institution in the Development Office.

I want someone who can go into smoke-filled rooms and talk to men and get money.

Jones (1987) states that one out of three men still don't accept women as managers or leaders. Experiences disclosed by participants in this study supported this belief.

Stokes (1984) and Harvard (1986) reported that black women believed that black men saw them as not having any real power. This mode of thinking was exhibited in a participant's experiences when a male subordinate and friend would always introduce her as "the wife of" or would state that "she worked at..." He would never say what her title was or that she was his supervisor. "That would never have happened if I were a man," the participant remarked.

Some participants also voiced problems incurred in their social/personal lives because of their ambitions and accomplishments.

Black professional females have problems in their personal life because black men sometimes do not want to accept the success of a black woman. A personal life is hard for us because our jobs are so demanding and we are so determined to do a good job, that we want to play a super, artificial being...superwoman.

As Solomon (1985) noted, education for black women aroused opposition because it gave black women an identity outside of the family and represented possible abandonment of traditional roles. The following comment from a participant reflects that continued resistance.

On a very personal level..., during the time that I was deciding on the degrees..., I was engaged and the person...did not feel that I needed any other degrees....Lots of males...[lack] support or appreciation for a female with a brain and I decided a long time ago that I don't want to play stupid to get one.

Not all participants shared experiences of lack of support and understanding in their personal lives. Some spoke proudly of their supportive relationships with their spouses or loved ones.

With my husband in politics, a lot of people would feel that I had been restricted in doing some of the things that I wanted to do, but that has not been the case. I have been allowed to be me and I've done the things that I've wanted to do....One of the reasons why I think I have become a success is...because I've had an understanding husband. You know he's my greatest supporter, my greatest critic and my best friend.

This supports Arfken's (1983) study of professional women which revealed that one of the advantages of dual-professional marriages was the support of an encouraging husband.

Along with sharing the effects they perceived race and sex to have had on their lives, the following section describes survival techniques participants used to cope with negative experiences.

### Survival Techniques

In response to what strategies they used to cope with adversities, conflicts and hindrances, some participants explained how they have reversed those types of experiences to serve as motivating factors rather than to allow them to be deterrents. Difficult and unpleasant situations had the same effect on women during slavery, and also caused them to be more determined to achieve (Lerner, 1973).

Well, during those times when I've had to deal with the situations [barriers, conflicts, etc.], I've either tried to communicate with those individuals or simply played the game....I think it's actually those people who have caused conflict in my life that have contributed a great deal to my success, or my perceived success....I continue to try and cope because I know that nothing lasts forever.

I shall never forget...I had a professor who said that the Supreme Court and all the devils in hell couldn't make him believe black folks were supposed to be sitting in graduate school with white folks....He made me determined to prove to all those people in the classes and to him that his philosophy was wrong. I knew what his problem was but it was his problem, it wasn't mine. He said, 'well if you make an A in this class, you've taught me a lesson.' I made an A in his class.

The strategies utilized by other participants in coping with adversities center around doing something about the things that one can and accepting those things that one cannot control or change.

All situations in the world fall into one of two categories — those which you can do something about and those about which you can do nothing. And if there is something that you can do about the situation, then get up and do it. If you can't do anything about it, you release it and leave abundantly as you can without it. If you look at things very hard, most of them are things that you can do something about. So you get up and do it.

There were always blocks and hindrances and conflicts [that went] on and on and on. You look at them, you identify them, you know what they are and you smile and know within yourself that God is going to take you through and you are not going to let them bother you.

Well, I call it keeping your eye on the prize, and the prize is what good are you doing and why are you doing it. Then [I] try not to be deterred by what others are saying or doing.

You know barriers [are] there but it doesn't mean that you can't change them or move them. So if I am in a situation and I feel that its a barrier, what I will tend to do is...observe first and then decide what I need to do to get over it or around it. So I will come up with a plan to deal with that particular situation.

Other participants described how they preferred to deal directly with adversities or to confront their adversaries.

If I see a hindrance, I'll address it. I think I'd be doing myself a disservice as well as my male counterparts to let it slide because sometimes people will do things and they don't know the effect that it is having on someone else, and they will commit that same error again.

The first thing I like to do is to let people know when I am confronted with it [a hindrance]. If I have enough evidence to convince me..., then I will call it to the forefront and I will make sure that the person with whom I am dealing understands that I recognize it for what it is and [although] I cannot necessarily change [their] attitude, I will not tolerate certain kinds of behavior....You can't force people to be something other than what they are, but you can have an impact on how they deal with you.

What I tend to do is to bring it up. The person may not hear it the first time but I don't give up...[I] keep coming back with it, [I] don't take it personally. And I guess that is one thing that many women may have to learn is that you don't take things personally. You have to keep at it; you don't internalize it.

Participants also mentioned the building of support structures and the use of strong support groups that are both internal and external to the work environment, as another strategy utilized to cope with adversities. Several organizations were mentioned as assisting in helping participants overcome barriers. They also named mentors and role-models who provided guidance and support during positive and negative experiences.

### Mentors and Role-Models

Alexander & Scott (1983), who conducted a study of 39 black women administrators, concluded that mentor relationships were critical in the career development of the women in their study. They also reported that all of the women in their study indicated that some significant person contributed to their personal or career development, either their mother, minister, or another black professional. In this study, the word frequency count indicated the following: black individuals were mentioned in the context of being a source of help when other advice was missing (7); family members were described as important mentors (9); schools (10), colleges (9) and churches (2) were named as places where mentors were found; mentoring was mentioned as occurring most frequently on the job (16); and mentors were described as providing direction (10); assistance (9); support in making decisions (6); insight (3); involvement (3); encouragement (2); guidance (2); and motivation (2).

The participants described the love, concern, dignity, strength, vigor, pride and determination their supporters or "significant others" possessed, despite the fact that some of them, particularly the guardians, did not have high school diplomas or college degrees. Many participants greatly admired these individuals and referred to them as role-models, mentors and friends. They expounded on the motivation, encouragement and inspiration their supporters provided on a steadfast and continuous basis. The participants spoke proudly of the high moral and educational values espoused by all those who greatly influenced their lives, especially by their parents or guardians. Individuals, both males and females within churches, schools, the community and the work environment were also cited as persons having a great impact on the participants' beliefs,



initiatives, goals and accomplishments. Elementary, high school, college and Sunday school teachers, ministers, educators, pioneers, professional supervisors and other relatives and friends were among the other role-models and mentors participants acknowledged.

In response to who was/were the most influential person(s) in their lives, participants mentioned a teacher(s) as the most influential non-family member(s). The mother was the family member listed most frequently as the most influential person in participants' lives. Table 8 shows the frequency of all of the individuals mentioned. As Rodgers-Rose (1980) points out, the strongest bond in slavery was that between mother and child. Lerner (1973) discusses how black motherhood continues to play a vital role in the black family. That trend is supported by results of this study.

Alexander & Scott (1983) state that women who make it "to the top" of management can contribute much to the professions they represent. All participants in this study have served or are currently serving as role-models and mentors to students, peers, employees and youth within their organizations, churches and communities. They expressed appreciation that they had inspiring, encouraging, strong and consistent individuals throughout their own personal and professional lives, and therefore believed that they should provide the same for others.

All participants were willing to share their hopes, dreams, struggles, disappointments, even failures. They expressed their eagerness to share with others what the climb upward entailed and some of what is involved in maintaining a senior-level position as a black woman. Ambitions and perceptions they have for future opportunities in administration in higher

Table 8. Individuals Most Influential in the Lives of a Sample (n=14) of Senior-Level Black Women Administrators in Higher Education in North Carolina

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<u>Most Influential Individuals</u>	<u>Frequency Listed</u>	
	<u>Constant Comparative Method</u>	<u>Word Frequency Study</u>
Mother	4	5
Grandmother	3	3
Parents	2	2
Father	2	3
Family	1	1
Sister	2	2
Brother	1	1
Teachers	4	5
Friends	2	2
Supervisor, Educator, Minister, etc.)	3	NR

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NR - information not reported

education are discussed in the following section.

### Administrative Mobility

None of the participants' initial goal was to be a senior-level administrator in higher education. However, due to the opportunities they sought, the challenges they accepted, and their preparation, they became equipped and qualified to move into these positions. As the opportunities arose, they accepted the administrative roles offered.

I didn't consciously make the decision to be an administrator; it was 'a natural progression of circumstances.' I started out as an instructor..., got my Ph.D...., and then I went from chairperson of the department to division director to vice president.

I had no idea, no thought, no desire and no plan to be in higher education administration because I was happy as the professor helping to build and mold the minds [of students]....I guess, through a series of steps and a series of affording people an opportunity to see what I could do, 'I just happened!'

I entered the doctoral program...in administration in higher education and student affairs...because I'd been in the classroom but I wanted more. I wanted the leverage of being creative and yet still have a major impact on decisions for a mass of people.

I came up through the ranks.... I paid attention to things and gained knowledge that way. I made it my business, as a learning process, to find out what went on, and to learn procedures and policies of both the university and the state.

I became frustrated as a counselor because so often you have people just pass and send policies down that make no sense at all but you are suppose to implement them. I just knew I could do better than people who were passing those decisions down to me.

One reason I knew I'd end up in administration was because I always wanted to make my own decisions about life and what I was going to do. I knew then that part of my mission in education would be to work with students outside of the classroom.

I got involved in administration almost by accident. I took a mid-level position, and I found that I was probably more closely cut out for that than for being a reporter. And I have kind of grown into what I'm doing now.

My [current] position...came as a result of [black] students complaining that their needs weren't being addressed or met. They wanted to make minority affairs a full-time focus so the vice-chancellor asked if I would be interested. I was previously in a position in this division that involved working with minority affairs and women leadership.

Someone [in an administrative position] said [to me], 'I have the perfect job for you.' He gave me the opportunity and encouragement to design and do some special programs. I think if I had been in any other environment, it just would not have happened. He was supportive in making things happen.

The process of black women's entry into higher education has been linked with social, economic and political factors, as has been discussed in the section on socio-cultural influences. Despite the conditions, the black women in this study persisted, took advantage of opportunities and progressed to their current positions. Statistics (30) from the word frequency study indicated that participants had a desire to do more, to change things, to advance.

In response to the question of whether they desired to advance within their current organizations or in higher education as a whole, participants' ages seemed to influence their responses. The oldest participants (ages 60-66) were nearing retirement and had fewer or no aspirations to advance. The participants (ages 40-59) who were near the average age (49) of all participants, exhibited more confidence and eagerness to advance than the other participants. The youngest participants (ages 32-39) appeared to be somewhat dismayed with some of the experiences they had encountered thus far in their roles; they wanted more education or mentioned the possibility of moving into another field or undertaking other adventures.

The older participants' responses to the question display their continued tenaciousness as they describe their plans for an active retirement.

I am nearing the age now where I will be retiring. I don't think of retiring as something that will stop me from doing something because I'll be doing something all along. In terms of a position, I came here with the intent of having a great time at the end of a formal professional career.

When I retire I intend to do some counseling and other things in the child care area. Once I leave this position, I will work with parenting skills and training of young people,... and I'll do some workshops, seminars and all kinds of activities that would enable them to develop to their potential and help them get jobs.

Other older participants added,

No, I've had no other aspirations because I like and enjoy what I do and I have the opportunity to meet a lot of people from all walks of life. I never wanted to be a [top] administrator because it would take me out of the things that I enjoy. I never wanted to move out of administration because it would take me away from the general public, alumni and community.

At this point in my career, I would like to make significant contributions [to this area]. If an opportunity for a larger role became available, I would consider it.

The confidence and/or eagerness of the middle-aged participants was evident in their responses. As one remarked, "Yes I would like to be a college president one day. I think I'd be a very good one." Another participant echoed, "Yes, I think that eventually I will go further in higher education and I believe that this will happen in the next three to five years, when I will apply for the presidency of a small college." Other middle-aged participants responded as follows:

Where do I go from here? The presidency somewhere. I've not jumped any hoops. I started as a counselor, director of counseling services, dean, and now vice-president. Nobody will ever offer me anything less than that....Each new position I get leads me to the presidency of some institution.

My real inspiration is a vice-presidency at a larger college. Five or six years from now, I can achieve goals I have [here]. I don't think I would necessarily want to be a president but I would like to stay in higher education.

There's not doubt about it. I know that I could function as the president or chancellor of a university. I know that I have the potential for that. I know that I have the skills and I feel confident that I could do it tomorrow, but that's not something I want.

I have no interest in being a vice-president or anything like that. That's not something I choose to do. I enjoy working behind the scene and making other people look good. I'm doing what I enjoy doing right now.

The youngest of the participants displayed their disinterest in advancing to higher levels of administration at this time. Some discussed other ventures they would like to explore within the next few years.

I don't want to be a senior-level administrator at a large institution, maybe at a small school. I really don't want the responsibility that you would have at a large institution because I don't want to deal with those kinds of decisions although I think I could do it....I want to get married and have children and I don't think I could make that balance because in order to be a chief student affairs officer, you have to give up certain things in that role. I don't want to be at the top where the buck stops and anything that goes wrong within the system, you're accountable for.

...Not in this field....I don't see wanting a vice-chancellorship or anything on that order because I don't really see a division I'd like to be in charge of. I see some other opportunities available and I'm not sure that I've gotten the private sector out of my system.

I may come back into administration but I don't think I will be remaining in this organization that much longer. A lot of factors would have to fall into place. I really don't have a mentor [now] which is probably why I'm thinking of leaving educational administration and going back into the corporate world or entrepreneurship. Perhaps if I had a mentor to step back into the picture, I may change my mind

because my love is still education.

This response reflects the strong value of a mentor in the life of an individual, particularly a young black woman who is in a non-traditional role. The responses of these participants did not signify that mentors had to or needed to be any particular race, age or sex. What seemed to make the difference was the willingness, openness, honesty and respect a mentor would have for the protegee.

The responses of the youngest participants appear to reflect disappointment, frustration and concern for some of the experiences they have had thus far and for some of the requirements for more advanced positions. Some have observed the weight and trials of these positions and have thought about their priorities in life, and have decided that it would be difficult or undesirable to combine the two.

None of the participants displayed a lack of confidence in undertaking a more advanced position. Those who expressed the desire to continue along the lines of their current roles and responsibilities, take a more advanced role at a smaller school, or move into a different arena, indicated that these choices were influenced by their desires, priorities, and goals. None who aspired to go further in the organization mentioned that they anticipated being confronted with barriers that would prevent them from obtaining higher positions; they simply shared with confidence their desire or goal to go to the top. These women spoke of their confidence, determination, and commitment, which far surpassed the perception of a woman as a nurturer, caretaker or helpmate. The following statements made by the participants during the interviews exemplify these traits or qualities:

### Confidence

I take pride in being the best that I can be and I take nothing less than excellence.

I know that I am capable of doing the best that I can in a particular area.

I feel that I've given the best of my ability in everything I've tried to do.

I have confidence in myself and that is something nobody can destroy.

### Determination

Well I was always a little bit hard-headed and I was determined....I was going to do what I set out to do. I never overtly nor covertly gave in to any encouragement to do anything other than what I said I was going to do.

I'm a determined person and I take every opportunity as a challenge.

Well one thing about it, if I make up my mind, I will go through hell and high water to do it. Now once I set a goal, that's it, whatever it takes.

Once doctors said I had six months to live and that I would never have any children. I have one son now. During that time, I just had to withdraw and do what was necessary.

One of the things that people must miss about what happens to people who grow out of a situation, soar and go where they want to, is something that they can't measure, and that is determination. For that, there is no scale. You might let me take the Myers-Briggs, but you can't give me an instrument that will measure my determination, my attitude or what I can do.

### Commitment

I guess I'm intrinsically motivated....If I'm going to be involved in something, then I really want to be involved in it and I want to do the very best that I can.

I would put all the effort or energy I could whenever I wanted to go for a position..., trying to measure what the needs of the position were, and then trying to do an excellent job when I started working [there].



My motivation or driving force has always been attempting to be involved professionally in those things I'm personally committed to. I think that you have to be in an environment where your work is rewarding; you have a personal commitment; and you know you have options to be where you are. That's one of the things I think about when I make a decision within my career..., trying to move toward those areas where I can make a real difference.

I always keep myself on top of things in terms of my professional development....I could not sit back and be comfortable with doing just the job which is on the job description.

Although all of the participants perceived themselves as having a level of confidence, determination and commitment, they varied in their perceptions of their level of success.

#### Perceptions as Senior-Level Black Women Administrators

The researcher was interested in how the participants perceived their roles as senior-level administrators. When asked whether they perceived themselves as successful, six of the 14 participants felt confident with what they had accomplished and quickly and proudly responded that they perceived themselves as successful. Four stated that they were "reasonably successful"; "had margins of success"; or answered "maybe". Two responded that they were not successful, but acknowledged that they had accomplished some of their goals, but perhaps not to the point of "success". One participant responded, I see myself as highly goal-oriented and I am continually making new goals when particular ones are achieved. Another responded, "I see my career as successful, but I don't see myself as successful."

Each participant elaborated on her perceptions or definitions of success. Some expressed that based on the difficult barriers they overcame,

they definitely felt successful. Others shared things that were important to them that made them feel successful. Still others mentioned how there were other things they'd like to achieve before they would perceive themselves as successful. Some participants described their perceptions of the ingredients required to be successful, such as being happy with what one is doing. All participants, despite their responses to this question, indicated their need to continue to set and achieve additional goals. Although one participant expressed that she felt she had given her best, all participants conveyed their desires to continue to serve and help others.

Participants described their professional strengths and weaknesses in their senior-level administrative roles. Tables 9 and 10 summarize those responses. The participants (n=14) most frequently mentioned their ability to influence others (4); to get along and work with others (4); their organizational skills (4); and their resourcefulness (3) as their strengths.

The weaknesses mentioned most frequently by the participants were their tendency to overload or overwork themselves (3); their impatience (3); their hesitancy to say no (2); their inability to make fast decisions (2); their low tolerance for incompetence (2); and their lack of experience with working with budgets (2). The strengths of some participants were the weaknesses of others. A few participants pointed out that some of their qualities or characteristics were "double-edged", or served as strengths and weaknesses. They expressed situations in which they witnessed that these traits had both positive and negative effects in their lives. The double-edged traits mentioned were being analytical, a risk-taker and a workaholic; having tunnel vision and a tendency to overload self; and working beyond the call of duty.

Table 9. A Sample (n=14) of Senior-Level Black Women Administrators in Higher Education in North Carolina: Perceptions of their Professional Strengths (1989-1990)

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<u>Nouns</u>		<u>Adjectives</u>		<u>Phrases</u>	
Analyzer	2	Alert	1	Ability to get along/	
Communicator	1	Calm	2	work with others	4
Decision-Maker	2	Creative	2	Ability to influence	
Listener	1	Encouraging	1	others	4
Motivator	2	Empathic	1	Ability to inspire	
Organizer	4	Fair	2	confidence	2
Perfectionist	1	Goal-oriented	1	Extraordinary memory	1
Problem-solver	1	Patient	1	Global view of things	2
Risk-taker	2	People-oriented	2	Reach out to others	1
Stick-to-		Persistent	1	Respect for self	1
itiveness	1	Proud	1	Share responsibilities	1
Supporter	1	Religious	1	Strong academic	
Team-worker	1	Resourceful	3	background	1
Understanding	1	Sensitive	1	Strong personality	1
Workaholic	1	Straightforward	1	Tendency to overload	
Visionary	1	Student-		self	1
		oriented	1	Tunnel vision	1
				Utilization of support	
				system/networking	1
				Utilization of people	
				skills	1
				Value system	1
				Working beyond the call	
				of duty	1
				Working for unity	1
				Write well	2

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Numbers represent frequency responses occurred.

Table 10. A Sample (n=14) of Senior-Level Black Women in Higher Education in North Carolina: Perceptions of their Professional Weaknesses (1989-1990)

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<u>Nouns</u>		<u>Adjectives</u>		<u>Phrases</u>	
Analyzer	1	Dogmatic	1	Get too involved with	
Perfectionist	1	Impatient	3	people	1
Risk-taker	1	Opinionated	1	Inability to make fast	
Workaholic	1			decisions	2
				Hesitancy to say no	2
				Knowledge of budgets	2
				Low tolerance for	
				incompetence	2
				Tendency to overload	
				self	3
				Theory-focused	1
				Tunnel vision	1
				Working beyond the call	
				duty	1

---

Numbers represent frequency responses occurred.

Although all participants exhibited high levels of confidence as they described themselves and their lives, none specifically named confidence as a strength or weakness. Two participants mentioned having the ability to inspire confidence in others as a strength. Nevertheless, the presence of confidence was implied in many of the experiences, challenges, and responsibilities the participants recounted to the researcher.

To determine indirectly whether the participants perceived themselves as effective administrators, the researcher solicited their perceptions of characteristics of an effective administrator. Their responses are reproduced in Table 11. Of the 54 responses listed in this table, more than half (31) were also listed as the participants' perceptions of their own strengths. This implies that these women perceive themselves as effective. Participants most frequently mentioned confidence (5), the ability to motivate or challenge others (4), the ability to work with others (4) and the need to maintain knowledge of their area (4), as characteristics of an effective administrator.

The participants' accounts of their experiences can add to the limited knowledge on black women administrators that is documented thus far. Many can benefit from this information — men, whites, institutions, society, and especially aspiring black women administrators. Advice, guidance and direction that participants offer to aspirants constitute one method of assistance mentors provide to proteges.

### Mentoring

Harvard (1986) stresses that black women leaders in higher education must be willing to share their successes and failures with aspiring black .

Table 11. A Sample (n=14) of Senior-Level Black Women Administrators in Higher Education in North Carolina: Their Perceptions of Characteristics of An Effective Administrator (1989-1990)

<u>Nouns</u>		<u>Adjectives</u>		<u>Phrases</u>	
Analyzer*	1	Assertive	2	Ability to motivate/ challenge others*	4
Communicator*	3	Caring	1	Ability to work with others*	4
Decision-Maker*	2	Committed*	2	Acquired educational background*	1
Evaluator	1	Compassionate*	2	Belief in someone greater*	2
Financial manager	1	Competent	1	Desire to succeed	1
Focuser	1	Confident	5	Desire to do a good job*	1
Follower	1	Efficient	1	Dressing for success	1
Goal-setter*	1	Energetic	1	Hiring qualified people	1
Organizer*	1	Fair*	1	Maintaining integrity	1
Planner*	3	Future- oriented*	1	Maintaining knowledge of area*	4
Team-worker*	2	Honest	3	Setting realistic expectations of staff	1
		Inspiring*	1	Sharing information	1
		Intelligent	1	Sharing responsibilities*	3
		Motivating*	1	Utilizing people skills*	3
		Open-minded	3	Utilizing supervisory skills*	3
		People- oriented*	1	Utilizing support system/networking*	3
		Prepared*	2	Value system*	1
		Respectful*	2		
		Responsible*	1		
		Responsive	1		
		Self-motivating*	1		
		Sensitive*	1		
		Sincere	1		
		Tenacious	1		
		Trained*	1		
		Trusting	1		

Numbers represent frequency responses occurred.

\*Responses consistent with participants' perceptions of their own strengths.

## women administrators

In response to what advice they would give to future senior-level black women administrators, the participants believed that in order for an aspiring black female administrator to be effective, she needs to be assertive, competent, decisive, flexible, observant, optimistic, organized, political, positive, prepared, and visible. They also added that she must be a good follower; a listener; a mentor; able to delegate duties and authority; aware of natural barriers, resistances, and lack of support; aware of technological advances; careful about what they say and to whom; involved in community, professional and social organizations; and proud of their aspirations.

Other advice participants offered centered around goals, values, education, training, attitudes, support, skills, coping strategies, confidence, faith, and other practices of effective management.

In regard to goals, participants stated that future administrators should:

1. Set their own goals;
2. Try to define career goals and strategies early;
3. Continue to improve themselves.

While the current administrators viewed their acquisition of a leadership title as an exciting adventure, they urged caution as well as provided encouragement. Participants encouraged aspirants to never compromise their values, to not mix love life and career life, and to never accept responsibilities for the wrong reasons.

In regard to education and training, participants suggested that aspirants:

1. Keep an attitude for learning;

2. Continue their education and training;
3. Get their credentials, preferably a terminal degree;
4. Keep abreast of current publications and changing issues.

Participants encouraged aspirants to utilize their resources, abilities and effective communication skills. They felt that aspirants should keep an attitude of wanting to serve others.

Participants believed that in order for aspirants to receive support that is helpful and beneficial, they should:

1. Establish good working relationships;
2. Develop an internal and external network system;
3. Know subject matter/field;
4. Gain respect from others.

Participants suggested that aspirants could cope better with barriers, conflicts or hindrances if they:

1. Knew the system, rules and politics of the organization;
2. Knew how to play the game, especially in an old boys' network;
3. Didn't expect too much;
4. Didn't look back;
5. Separated home and career life (left personal problems at home).

Participants encouraged aspirants to have faith and be confident. As one stated, "Believe in yourself, your fellow man, and in God."

Other advice participants believed would contribute to effective management strategies that aspirants should practice included:

1. Investigate role and environment before accepting a position;
2. Know policies, philosophy, structure and operation of organization;
3. Know goals and objectives of entire area/division;



4. Plan;
5. Stay on task;
6. Volunteer for tasks beyond responsibilities;
7. Hold subordinates accountable;
8. Cross train (share information);
9. Gather information before making decisions;
10. Use good common sense;
11. Don't be overwhelming;
12. Have respect for self;
13. Negotiate for top salary.

Obviously the advice these participants would give to future black women administrators are valuable lessons they have learned throughout their lives. Some have learned through trial and error, and others have gained insight from achievements. Regardless of the method this advice was received, these are suggestions that stood out as most important to participants for future black women administrators to avoid, or to be sure to utilize.

#### Data From Word Pairs Portion of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)

Forty-two black women in higher education completed the Word Pairs portion of the MBTI. These women included the 14 senior-level administrators and two comparison groups of 14 black women each of comparable age and level of education. The search for women in these groups was only partially successful. The three groups did not differ significantly in age and educational level as shown in Table 12. Table 12 also provides the means and standard deviations of the ages and educational levels of each

Table 12. Means and Standard Deviations of Ages and Educational Levels of Senior-Level Black Women Administrators in Higher Education and Women Comparable in Age and Educational Level in North Carolina (1989-1990)

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	<u>n</u>	<u>Ages</u>		<u>Years of Schooling</u>	
		<u>X</u>	<u>s</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>s</u>
Group 1	14	49	10.36	20	1.7
Group 2	14	48	9.35	15	1.3
Group 3	14	42	7.89	20	1.7

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\*  $t(26) = 1.03$  [ns]

\*\*  $t(26) = 1.36$  [ns]

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Group 1 - Target group

Group 2 - Comparable age group

Group 3 - Comparable educational level group

\* t-test between groups 1 and 2 on age

\*\* t-test between groups 1 and 3 on years of schooling

group. The Word Pairs portion of the MBTI is designed to reveal participants' preferred ways of using perception and judgement. The researcher was interested in how the preferences of the target group differed from those of the comparison groups, and what implications the differences had on career choices.

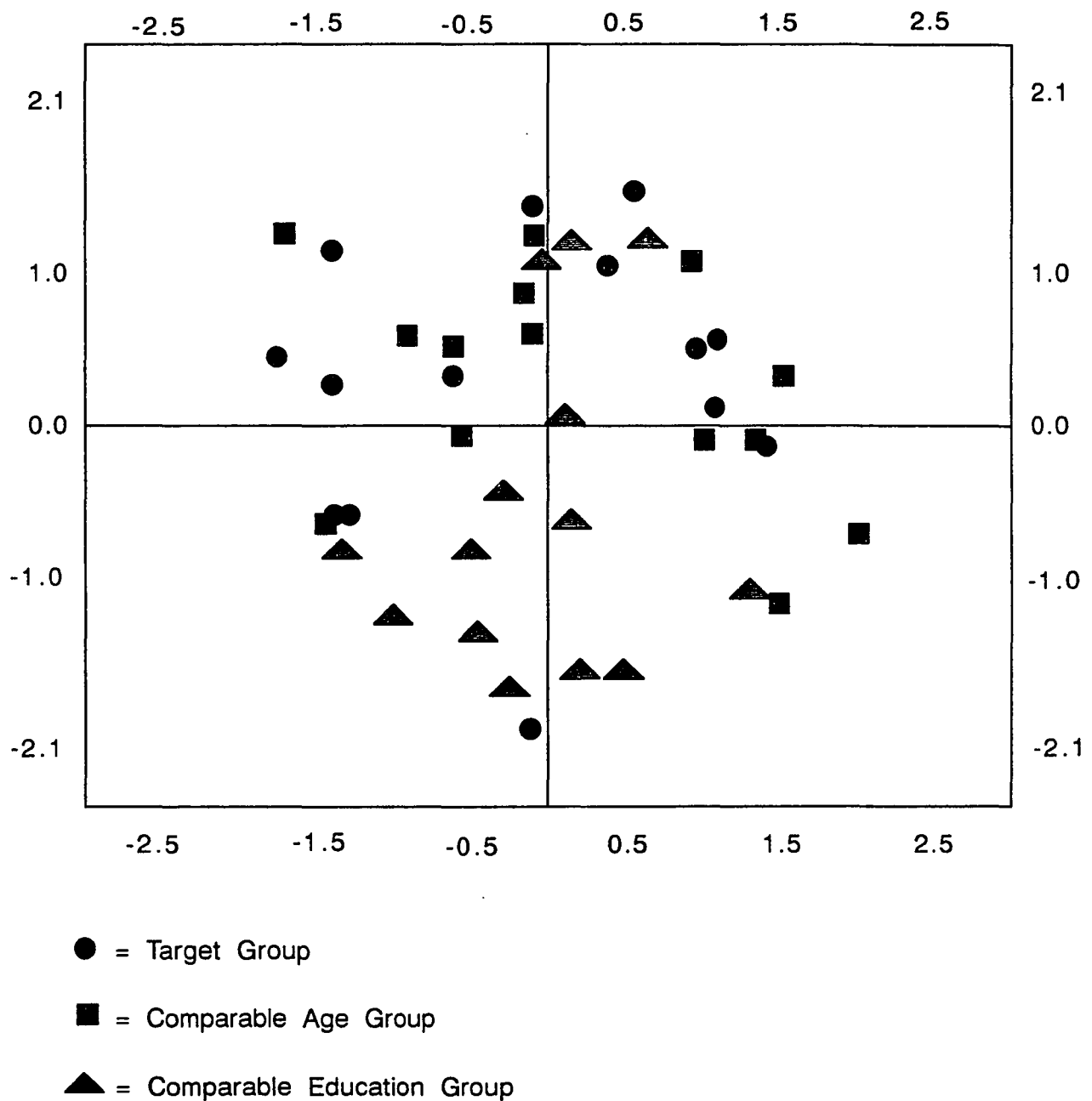
Myers (1985) made the following hypotheses about the dynamics of the Word Pairs:

Hypothesis One. People who wish they were a different type [of person] may tend to answer the...Word Pairs according to what they would like to be, that is, what 'appeals' to them. Hypothesis Two. People who feel insecure about the worth of their type may tend to reverse the process and answer the...Word Pairs with answers reflecting what they really feel they are. Hypothesis Three. People who are secure and confident in their type but are working to develop their less-liked processes may tend to present a mixed picture on the Word Pairs (p. 61).

A multidimensional scaling analysis of the Word Pairs was conducted using subject-by-subject correlations as indices of similarity. Figure 1 shows a two-dimensional plot of responses of 42 subjects. Distances between the subjects indicate the overall similarity of the responses to the Word Pairs. Visually, the group that was comparable in education responded differently (majority of their responses were below the horizontal axis) from both the target group and the group comparable in age (majority of their responses were above the horizontal axis). However the stress for the two-dimensional MDS solution was only .35 which indicates an unusually poor fit. Moreover it proves difficult to represent the subjects' responses by reference to only a few dimensions.

The lack of difference was further confirmed by an inverse or Q-factor analysis. This analysis was performed on the 42 x 42 subject

Figure 1. Two-Dimensional Plot of the "Subject Space" of a Sample (n=14) of Senior-Level Black Women Administrators in Higher Education and Women Comparable in Age and Educational Level in North Carolina (1989-1990)



intercorrelation matrix. The target group's responses to the instrument could not be distinguished from the responses of the two comparison groups.

The results of these analyses indicate that the responses of the black women interviewed in this study didn't differ significantly from the black women comparable in age and education. If the groups differed, it was not apparent in the person factor space. Differences in how these women preferred to use their perception and judgement and the implications these differences may have had on their career choices or level of achievement could not be determined in this study. This implies that the ways in which these women preferred to use their perception and judgement were not major factors in their achievements or career paths.

## Chapter V

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Summary

This study explored the personal, educational and professional lives of 14 senior-level black women administrators in higher education within Forsyth and Guilford counties (the Triad area) of North Carolina. The senior-level positions ranged from academic dean to vice-president. Participants were employed at one historically white and three historically black colleges and universities. Three institutions were public co-educational universities and one was a private women's college.

Data were collected through personal interviews. Thirteen of the 14 interviews were audio-taped; written notes were taken for one interview. All interviews were transcribed and analyzed utilizing computer text analysis and the constant comparative method. The interview sessions were in-depth and open-structured. This approach allowed a free flow of conversation and the unsolicited information gave the investigator additional knowledge and understanding of each subject. An interview guide, which was reviewed for clarity and content by five middle-level administrators, was used to assure coverage of specific questions to be addressed by each subject. Other data were gained through the Word Pairs portion of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI). The MBTI was administered to the target group and 14 black women each of comparable

age and educational level. Multidimensional scaling (MDS) and Q-factor analysis were used to analyze these data. The target group's responses could not be distinguished from the two comparison groups.

Selected quotations from the interviews were included in Chapter IV in order to present the similarities and differences in the respondents' accounts of their personal experiences, successful leadership strategies, and career development. Summaries from the text analyses presented consistencies that emerged from the participants' descriptions of their lives. These patterns could serve as traits of effective leaders or indicators of success for future black women administrators.

A major stimulus for this investigation was the dearth of information concerning senior-level black women administrators. Despite the rise and increased visibility of black women in these positions, little was known about their emergence - who they were, their prior or developmental experiences, the commonalities in their emergence patterns, their initial developmental experiences and their career paths.

### Summary of Findings

Information gathered from the 14 participants provided responses to the research questions cited in Chapter I. A synopsis of the findings is presented for each question:

Question One: What personal, educational and professional experiences hindered and/or enhanced the career development of senior-level black women administrators in higher education?

### Personal Experiences

Personal experiences that participants cited as enhancements to their career development included the guidance, support and values of their parents toward education. Eighty-six percent of the participants emphatically described the expectation their parents or guardians held for them to attend college. Much of their personal development was described in the educational context. Lerner (1973) noted the continuing incentive black females have received over the years to advance their education. Collier-Thomas (1982) points out the consistency of education as a theme in the lives of blacks.

Nearly fifty percent of the participants indicated that their mother was the most influential individual in their lives. The strongest bond in slavery was between mother and child (Rodgers-Rose, 1980). Lerner (1973) reports that black motherhood continues to play a vital role in the black family. Other influential individuals included fathers, grandmothers, siblings, teachers, educators and ministers. Participants considered these individuals to be role-models and/or mentors. All participants stated that they had a mentor and/or role-model in their personal, educational and professional lives. Alexander & Scott (1983) concluded that mentor relationships were critical in the career development of women.

As another career enhancement, two participants mentioned the continued support, trust and encouragement received from their spouses. On the other hand, an experience that participants indicated was a potential hindrance to career development was the lack of support for their career ambitions by a male companion or spouse. The ending of the marriage of two participants led to the need for those participants to be



financially secure and self-supporting. Lerner (1973) noted that historically black women had to be trained from childhood to be self-supporting.

Seventy-two percent (10 of 14) of the study participants were single (8 of the 10 never married). These statistics suggest that in many cases, these women had to decide between the role of spouse or companion and a career. Only one participant voiced her decision to willingly interrupt her career span to raise their children. Studies by Fobbs (1988), Gasser (1975), Mark (1986), Mosley (1980) and Walsh (1975) report that this was one of the sacrifices that some women administrators have to make.

### Educational Experiences

As noted in the discussion of personal experiences, 12 of the 14 participants perceived the educational values of their parents or guardians as an enhancement to their career development. As there were mentors and role-models in their personal lives, there were also individuals who provided participants with direction, assistance and support in educational environments. These included teachers, principals and other educators. Fewer participants mentioned these individuals as the most influential person in their lives compared to the number of family members who were ranked as having the most influence.

Other experiences participants cited as enhancers to their career included receiving the highest level of education; involvement in training and preparation for new responsibilities; and recognition for outstanding academic achievement and community service.

Williams (1985) states that a minority woman, more than others, must have the doctorate and a resume that shows achievement and recognition by peers. Fifty-seven percent of study participants had their doctorates.

Their experience in higher education ranged from 7 to 18 years. All participants had either received recognition for outstanding awards; were active in community and professional organizations; and/or were recipients of fellowships and community and service awards. Some were listed in documents such as Who's Who Among Emerging Leaders, International Who's Who in Community Services, and Who's Who Among World Women.

The educational experiences that participants cited as hindrances to their career development centered around racial incidents that occurred in graduate schools. Participants believed that more was expected of them as black female students and that they were denied some of the same recognition and opportunities as other non-black female students. Harvard (1986), Mosley (1980), and Williams (1985) report that black women are sometimes faced with academic opportunities that are limited by barriers that have nothing to do with their qualifications or competencies.

### Professional Experiences

Professional experiences that participants felt enhanced their career development centered around the opportunities and experiences afforded them through their current positions. Such events as receiving leadership opportunities in higher education; chairing task forces and commissions; shifting from the classroom to administration; managing successful programs, and getting involved in professional organizations were included among the list of positive experiences for these participants.

Negative experiences or hindrances participants shared were incidents that related to race and gender. One participant disclosed her

experience with what she described as institutionalized racism. Others shared incidents in which they were denied opportunities for advancement, assistance or acceptance because of racial and sexual stereotypes.

All participants shared incidents of when they felt excluded, mistrusted, ignored or disregarded. Doughty (1980), Harvard (1986), and Mosley (1980) found that black women administrators had problems getting access to information necessary to do a job effectively. Two participants indicated their lack of experience and confidence in handling budgets. Williams (1975) pointed out the need for black women to have experiences in budgets, hiring and firing.

Stokes (1984) and Harvard (1986) report that women administrators are excluded from informal networks among male co-workers, have less influence on superior decisions, and feel it's difficult to receive recognition for their accomplishments. They add that black women administrators believe that black men see them as not having any real power.

Over half of the participants expressed their perceptions of being hindered from advancing to their current positions earlier in their careers because they were black and female.

The average age of the participants was 49 years old, with a range of 31-65 years old. Ninety-three percent of the participants had been employed in higher education for over 10 years with a range of 10 to 41 years, and an average of 20 years of experience. Eighty-six percent of the participants had been in their current positions for less than 10 years, 79% for less than two and a half years. Participants had been employed in higher education 7 to 31 years prior to acquiring their current positions. Doughty (1980), Harvard (1986), Mosley (1986), Williams (1985) state that black women adminis-

trators are usually older when tapped for administration. Fobbs (1988), Gasser (1975), Ironside (1982) and Tinsley (1985) also point out that women administrators take longer to achieve higher positions than males. The positions participants held included deans, assistants to, assistants, special assistants and vice-presidents. This supports studies by Moore & Wagstaff (1974) and Mosley (1980) which state that black women generally play supportive roles. Participants held two to four lower-level positions prior to their current positions. Participants who were vice-presidents were employed at the community college and the women's college. This is partially supported by research conducted by Fernandez (1981), Tinsley (1985) and Walsh (1975) which states that women administrators reach higher positions in community colleges versus four-year institutions.

Question Two: What procedures did senior-level black women administrators in higher education use in resolving hindrances in their personal, educational and professional lives?

In resolving hindrances in their personal, educational and professional lives, participants stated that they used the building of a support structure and the use of strong internal and external support groups as one strategy. They mentioned networks that included role-models, mentors and organizational members within their profession and in the community. Alexander & Scott (1983) suggest that black women administrators develop a cadre of supporters both inside and outside their departments and the university.

Another strategy participants described was an approach based on a philosophy of doing something about the things that can be controlled and accepting those things that cannot be controlled. If there is something that

you can do about the situation, then plan, prepare and do it. If not, then participants indicated that they accepted the situation as it was and utilized their energies on matters that could be changed or altered.

Participants reversed the effects of negative experiences and then rechanneled them to serve as motivators rather than as deterrents. Other participants shared that they deal directly with the source of the hindrances by confronting the individuals causing the barriers or the adversities.

Question Three: What common themes can be identified from the lives of senior-level black women administrators in higher education that would have implications for future black women administrators?

The profiles of the women included in this study indicate that they were nurtured and encouraged by strong family members and occasionally by professionals and members of the church and community, especially teachers, educators, leaders and ministers. Role-models, mentors and other support groups provided participants useful guidance, assistance and encouragement at varying intervals of their lives; however, for most, there weren't any formal social networks to guide them; no "hosts" to introduce them to their professions.

Most participants felt that they had been victims of both race and sex discrimination and that the energies they expended fighting this "double whammy" could have been used to accomplish other tasks or goals. Participants perceived that they were often denied equal rights and opportunities as black women. Hard work and preparation aided them in receiving some opportunities for advancement and in achievement of their

goals and aspirations. Their achievements demonstrate their abilities to adapt to and deal effectively with organizational hurdles, barriers and hindrances.

The 14 participants possessed a wide range of personal qualities and they became expert at career strategies that utilized experience, and made the most of their talents. They accepted responsibility and valued work, which resulted in sustained performance and a record of achievement. Their career paths demonstrated that administrative leadership abilities could be attained through pathways not totally in academe, as long as participants had the appropriate academic credentials. The participants' lives illustrated that while administrative experience is useful, what is needed the most are adaptability and a wide range of qualities and skills. An analysis of participants' career paths suggest that the success of these women or the attainment of their position were more a result of personal goals than of precise career planning and patterns of preparation.

One of the most important factors accounting for the professional success of the participants was the strong motivation each one had to move ahead and beyond barriers. They had a belief in their own abilities, a feeling that others believed in them, an interest in religion and a desire to excel. They became aware of their potential in their formative years. These women were not neophytes. They were individuals with substantial organizational experience who had developed through interactions in the home, school, church and community. They became leaders in school organizations, church and community activities. They possessed initiative, intelligence, determination and willpower and were conscientious and responsible individuals.

The senior-level black women administrators in this study possessed a keen awareness of their strengths, obtained necessary preparation for positions they acquired, and developed a commitment to make a change for the betterment of their lives and the lives of others. They exhibited a desire for responsibility commensurate with their abilities, and assumed the various duties with confidence. Despite the discrimination in the administrative positions they held, these women persevered, "in spite of the system." They were of the firm belief that hard work and preparation were essential ingredients for career success.

Commonalities that summarize participants' career success included their values which guided them in setting their goals and in making decisions that impacted the educational, personal and professional aspects of their lives; personal qualities which prompted initiative to venture out and accept challenges, and stamina to cope with barriers, conflicts and hindrances in their continual climb towards their goals; preparation and skills which enabled them to seize opportunities for leadership and advancement; and belief in themselves, which prevented them from losing sight of their dream or of giving up.

The senior-level black women administrators in this study shared a common concern to know, to understand, and to be able to influence their own destinies.

### Summary of Findings and Prior Research

The following statements about study participants are findings from this study that are consistent with findings from prior research on black and women administrators. Some of the prior research that supports

findings from this study is cited at the end of each statement.

1. Significant others contributing to the educational, personal and professional development of study participants were typically their mothers, other relatives, teachers, ministers or other black professionals (Alexander & Scott, 1983).

2. Historically, the women in this study were expected to be teachers; middle- and senior-level administration was closed to them until the sixties (Lerner, 1973).

3. None of the participants had set an early career goal of becoming a senior-level administrator; they sought opportunities, prepared themselves and accepted roles offered (Lanker, 1989; Lerner 1973; Napier, 1979).

4. These women were motivated and encouraged to complete their advanced degrees and to take advantage of opportunities for further growth and learning (Lerner, 1973).

5. Education persisted as one of the most consistent themes in the lives and struggles of study participants (Collier-Thomas, 1982).

6. Participants had resumes that included substantial educational background, experience, service and achievement awards, professional affiliations and committee assignments (Williams, 1985).

7. Participants were faced with academic opportunities that were limited by barriers that had nothing to do with their qualifications or competencies (Jones, 1987; Williams, 1985).

8. Racism and sexism were factors that influenced what positions participants could hold and where they could work (Collier-Thomas, 1982).

9. Participants were generally promoted from full-time lower positions and from within (Mosley, 1980; Napier, 1979).

10. Participants held higher positions in community and women's



colleges where they served in administrative authoritative positions, than they did in public universities where they played supportive roles in positions such as assistants to, special assistants, deans, and the like (Hoskins, 1978; Moore & Wagstaff, 1974; Mosley, 1980).

11. Some participants aspired to be president of an institution while others preferred other administrative roles (Ironsides, 1982; Tinsley, 1985).

12. Some participants lacked training or opportunities for planning, budgeting, operations or chairing committees (Moore & Wagstaff, 1974; Smith, 1980).

13. Participants generally felt overworked, underpaid, alienated and powerless (Harvard, 1986; Stokes, 1984).

14. Participants felt it was difficult to receive recognition and support for their abilities and accomplishments from top administrators (Harvard, 1986; Stokes, 1984).

15. Participants have been excluded from networks among males and have had difficulty gaining access to some information (Biemiller, 1981; Dohrman, 1982; Moore & Wagstaff, 1974).

16. Networking has provided valuable support in the participants' educational, personal and professional development (Alexander & Scott, 1983; Lewis, 1985; Wilkerson, 1984).

17. Participants expressed and exhibited positive attitudes and philosophies despite barriers and negative experiences (Doughty, 1980; Harvard, 1986).

These findings have implications for future senior-level black women administrators and can serve as advice, awareness, caution, direction and incentive for them.

Findings from prior research that were not supported by data from this study include the following:

1. Participants did not incur the issue of mobility as a barrier to receiving a more advanced position (Harvard, 1986; Mosley, 1980; Williams, 1985).
2. Participants did not experience pressure to choose between their womanhood and their racial identity (Carter, Pearson & Shavlik, 1988; DeJoie, 1977).
3. The majority of participants did not have interrupted career plans due to family responsibilities (Ironside, 1982; Mosley, 1980).
4. Participants did not perceive themselves as restraining traditional female behaviors in order to hold senior-level administrative positions (Dohrman, 1982; Harvard, 1986).
5. The following characteristics were not perceived by participants as internal barriers that kept them out of top leadership positions: lack of motivation, poor self-image, low career aspirations and self-limiting beliefs and attitudes (Dohrman, 1982; Harvard, 1986).

### Conclusions

Based on the data and findings presented in this study and the literature review in Chapter II, the researcher suggests the following conclusions:

1. The development of a person's leadership ability is partially enhanced by the values he or she learns as a child.
2. Influential role-models and mentors such as parents, teachers, church and community leaders are instrumental in fostering changes in

the lives of their youth.

3. Unlike for whites and men, substantial experience, education and outstanding resumes (including publications, professional affiliations and committee assignments) do not insure black women opportunities to receive administrative authoritative positions. These qualifications are essential however, for black women to be considered for these positions.

4. Black women administrators who show potential for excellent leadership should be given the opportunity to serve in administrative authoritative positions so that they could positively influence the lives of aspirants.

5. Most black women with appropriate education, experience and aspirations, if given the opportunity to serve in administrative positions, would perform at least equally as well as men and whites.

6. The degree of influence of black feminine leadership in higher education will be determined by the quality and quantity of black women administrators who are employed.

7. Racism and sexism are influences in the determination of black women obtaining policy-making and managerial positions.

8. Future black women leaders need to be undergirded by a strong base of management training, problem-solving and decision-making skills and technical assistance if the goals of excellence and equality are to be attained.

9. In order for black women administrators to feel more accepted and appreciated, they need to receive more recognition and support for their abilities and accomplishments from top administrators.

10. Involvement in professional organizations and networking are valuable assets in providing black women support and access to

information.

11. Black women continue to play a vital role in the black family and community, despite the injustices and oppression they have incurred over the years.

### Recommendations

As a result of this research, the investigator makes the following recommendations regarding senior-level black women administrators:

1. Scholars should recognize that women's lives differ in important ways from those of men and that there are differences in the development and life experiences of various subgroups of women and that black women deserve to be studied in their own right.

2. Educational institutions should create an awareness among university personnel about issues in black women's development and design interventions to address their needs.

3. Educational institutions should provide in-service training sessions for university personnel to make them aware of stereotyped attitudes and practices, recruitment processes and equity in the field of higher education.

4. Institutions of higher education must begin to establish policies that assure black women the same opportunities for promotion and advancement as their male and white counterparts and within similar time frames.

5. Professionals, professors and practitioners in higher education should examine further the role of the university in supporting and providing appropriate training for black women.

6. A more determined effort to acquaint talented black women

undergraduates with the opportunities and satisfactions of academic careers is recommended.

7. Financial support for graduate studies and professional growth must be made equally available to qualified candidates, regardless of sex and race.

8. A more precise examination of needs and barriers by level of administrative responsibility to allow precise targets for organizational change is needed.

9. Administrators should encourage the mentoring of promising black women and be prepared to demonstrate personal willingness to sponsor and advance them.

10. An assessment of the similarities and differences in the mentoring and networking processes and how these processes are combined to increase career advancement possibilities for black women administrators should be conducted.

#### Recommendations for Future Research

1. Longitudinal studies of women and men, both majority and minority, in different types of institutions and in different regions of the country that will yield information about the factors that promote and hinder advancement need to be conducted.

2. There should be a study of the perceptions of subordinates, supervisors, students and co-workers of the participants, to determine the degree to which their reported self-perceptions of their professional performance or experiences match the perceptions of others.

3. It would be helpful to observe and study the behaviors of the

participants of this study to compare their actual behaviors with the perceptions they articulated in this study.

4. More study and research to develop strategies for coping with racism-induced stress at predominantly white colleges and universities and sexism-reduced stress in all colleges and universities are needed.

5. More studies on why women discriminate against themselves or on the "queen bee syndrome", and training to accept and cope with this issue are needed.

6. Future research of more in-depth and focused data collection to explore the complex socialization process as individuals choose and enter graduate programs in higher education, develop and alter goals, and find support as they seek training and career mobility is needed.

7. In order to make comparisons with black women administrators in higher education, a similar study including black women managers or business executives in business and industry should be conducted.

8. A replicate study that explores and describes the shared culture of participants and the effects their culture has had on their educational and professional lives needs to be researched. Replications in other sections of the country and the cultural differences that may exist should also be examined.

9. A replicate study of black women's perceptions of themselves as administrators and how those self-perceptions differ from their perceptions of non-black administrators needs to be conducted.

10. Since this study consisted of 13 black senior-level women administrators from predominantly black institutions and only one black senior-level woman administrator from a predominantly white institution, a

replicate study should be done with a larger population of predominantly white institutions.

11. In order to explore whether black senior-level women administrators differ significantly on the Word Pairs portion of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) than black non-senior-level women administrators, a study involving a larger population of black women in higher education, and an ethnographic research approach is needed.

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**APPENDIX A**  
**Interview Guide**

## Interview Guide for an Investigation of Experiences that Enhanced and Hindered the Careers of Black Senior-Level Women Administrators

Please share with me experiences regarding your:

### EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

1. What were your educational goals after high school?
2. What and/or who motivated you to go to college?
3. Did your parents attend and complete college?
4. Did your siblings (if any) attend and complete college?
5. Did you have a mentor(s) at any level of your education?
6. Did your educational goals change anytime during your tenure in a college or university? If so, when?

### PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

1. What was your childhood like?
2. What influenced you most in your early childhood years (e.g. parental values, home or school environment, sibling order, etc.)?
3. Who influenced you most in your personal life?
4. How did your family impact your personal development?
5. How many siblings did you grow up with?
6. Approximately how many close friends did you have during your grade school and college years?

### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

1. What were your career goals after completion of high school?
2. What motivated you to reach your goals?
3. When did you decide to become an administrator?
4. What motivated you to become an administrator in higher education?
5. Did you have a mentor?
6. What were the greatest factors that influenced your career?
7. Do you feel that your educational and personal development greatly impacted your professional advancement?
8. What are your professional strengths?
9. What are your professional weaknesses?



10. Do you see yourself as successful? (Success is often described as living up to one's potential)?
11. Do you aspire to go further in the organization?
12. If you could recast your career pattern, would you make any changes?

## GENERAL QUESTIONS

1. What motivated you to reach your goals?
2. What forces/factors have helped you get where you are today?
3. What has been the greatest influence or catalyst for your advancement in higher education?
4. Who have been the most influential people in your life? Describe them.
5. How have they influenced you the most?
6. What have been key turning points in your life?
7. What barriers/conflicts/hindrances did you face in your:
  - a. educational development?
  - b. personal development?
  - c. professional development?
8. What were the greatest barriers/conflicts/hindrances?
9. What impact, if any, did they have on your life/career?
10. How did you cope with these barriers/conflicts/hindrances?
11. Have you found any strategies which work more successfully than others in helping you to cope with barriers/conflicts/hindrances?
12. From what sources did you get your greatest strength (family, support network, outside sources)?
13. Was there anything in your background that helped prepare you for coping with barriers/conflicts/hindrances?
14. In what ways would you have liked to receive assistance or guidance in:
  - a. educational institutions?
  - b. your personal life?
  - c. your professional experiences?
15. Would you be willing to serve as a mentor or assist future black women administrators in higher education?
16. Are you currently serving as a mentor?
17. If you were to offer any advice to future black women administrators just beginning their careers, what would it be?

18. What qualities or characteristics do you feel are important in order for black women administrators in higher education to be successful?

**APPENDIX B**  
**Confirmation Letter**

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT GREENSBORO  
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION  
GREENSBORO, NORTH CAROLINA 27412-5001

Dear

Thank you for agreeing to participate in the survey I'm conducting at the University of North Carolina-Greensboro during the 1989-1990 academic year. As we discussed during our telephone conversation on (date), the purpose of my study is to identify experiences that hindered or enhanced the educational, personal and professional development of black women administrators in higher education. I am also interested in strategies these women have used to cope with the hindrances they may have faced during their lives. From this information, I would like to identify themes that may be common in the lives of these women that may have implications for future black women administrators.

This letter serves to confirm our interview appointment to be held in (location) on (date and time). I am anticipating needing approximately an hour or more to conduct the interview. A copy of the interview guide is enclosed for your review. Anonymity will be insured in this study. Names of participants will not be used in any part of the study.

I am also enclosing a copy of a portion of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator that I would like for you to complete. If at all possible, I would like to collect the completed portion of this instrument and a copy of your resume on the day of the interview.

Again, I appreciate your willingness to be a part of my study. Your cooperation is invaluable. If you have any questions or concerns you would like to discuss with me prior to our first meeting, please feel free to leave a message for me at any time at 919/275-6764.

Sincerely yours,

Cheryl L. Troutman  
Doctoral Candidate  
Educational Administration

**APPENDIX C**  
**Word Pairs Portion of the Myers-Briggs**  
**Type Indicator (MBTI)**

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**APPENDIX D**  
**Personality Descriptors**

### Personality Descriptors

Rate (from 1 to 5) the relative appropriateness of each of these personality descriptors in your assessment of an ideal personality type (1 = low significance and 5 = high significance):

- |                                 |                      |
|---------------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. individualistic _____        | 20. verbose _____    |
| 2. unassuming _____             | 21. humble _____     |
| 3. sympathetic _____            | 22. aggressive _____ |
| 4. strong _____                 | 23. perceptive _____ |
| 5. knowledgeable _____          | 24. bold _____       |
| 6. intimidating _____           | 25. selfish _____    |
| 7. quiet _____                  | 26. disruptive _____ |
| 8. moody _____                  | 27. greedy _____     |
| 9. untroubled _____             | 28. severe _____     |
| 10. irresponsible _____         | 29. kind _____       |
| 11. mischievous _____           | 30. diligent _____   |
| 12. mediator _____              | 31. willing _____    |
| 13. manager _____               | 32. lazy _____       |
| 14. commanding _____            | 33. jealous _____    |
| 15. quarrelsome _____           | 34. demanding _____  |
| 16. peaceful _____              | 35. poor _____       |
| 17. recalcitrant (unruly) _____ | 36. restrained _____ |
| 18. obedient _____              | 37. fearful _____    |
| 19. possessive _____            |                      |